UNPUBLISHED LETTERS
OF THE
ALI BROTHERS

Unpublished Letters of the Ali Brothers

by

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To

Professor A. D. Pant,

My guru in actual
sense of the term

PREFACE

Mohamed Ali and Shaukat Ali, popularly known as the Ali Brothers, belong to that category of distinguished and eminent sons of India, whose memory cannot be erased by mere lapse of time. Among the galaxy of brilliant men that India has produced, the Ali Brothers were undoubtedly the most outstanding as well as the most controversial. Historians and biographers have expressed differing views regarding their contribution to the Indian struggle for freedom from foreign domination. To some they were nationalists to the core *of their hearts, while others considered them as communal with* extra-territorial sympathies, who finally drifted towards religious fanaticism.

The purpose of this collection of letters is to study the contribution they made to the political advancement of the country and assess their personalities as revealed in their letters, addressed to their contemporaries, and to refute the charges which have been wilfully or unwittingly brought against them in order to malign them and distort their image.

Nothing can reveal the contribution made by a person to a cause better and more convincingly than his own speeches and writings. Here an attempt has been made to collect the unpublished letters of the Ali Brothers and present them as an index to their multiphased personalities. A few letters published casually long before in the *Comrade* and in some London newspapers have also been included in this collection. It is assumed that the readers are aware how politics developed in this country and hence footnotes have been avoided and only biographical notes given.

The Ali Brothers have left a vast literature which has not been studied in its proper perspective. Some eminent scholars from Pakistan like Dr. Afzal Iqbal and Syed Rais Ahmad Jafri have reproduced the already published writings, and selections from the *Comrade*. But a good deal of the literature still remained to be

unearthed. The gap between the published and the unpublished material is still very wide and the latter has to be objectively studied and judiciously assessed in order to evaluate the true contribution made by their writers to the freedom struggle.

This humble work has been undertaken with a view to bridge the gap that still exists between the published and unpublished writings of the Ali Brothers and bring to light many facets of their personalities which have remained hidden so far. They were apostles of Hindu-Muslim unity, architects of Indian nationalism and imbued with religious fervour. Mahatma Gandhi admired them, and millions loved and followed them for their sincerity of purpose and catholicity of views.

The Ali Brothers dominated the Indian political scene from the time that the national movement took a definite shape. Despite the Gandhian philosophy of non-violence, there were some enthusiasts who were keen to push the Britishers outside India by non-violent means if possible and through violent means if necessary. The Ali Brothers belonged to latter category of freedom fighters. The part played by them in the struggle for freedom, the hardships they suffered, the privations they underwent, and the sacrifices they made, deserve to be objectively re-evaluated. From the large mass of unpublished writings which were available, I have confined myself to those letters only which throw light on the political activities of the Ali Brothers and go to remove the misunderstandings about them which have cropped up from time to time, and which have blurred the vision of historians and journalists alike.

Mohamed Ali's active political career started from 1906 and ended with his premature and sudden demise in 1931. There is no denying the fact that both he and Shaukat Ali were steeped in religious fervour, but this zeal does not in any way belittle their sacrifices in the national cause. They were zealous Muslims but were at the same time ardent nationalists. They never allowed the one to come into the way of the other, and faithfully rendered to Caesar what belonged to Caesar and to God what belonged to God.

This study was suggested to me by my senior colleague Professor Syed Nasir Ali whose kind support enabled me to complete this work in its present form. I am also thankful to Professor S. A. H. Haqqi, Professor K. A. Nizami, Professor A. B. Lal, Professor A. D. Pant and Mr. M. M. Siddiqui for their guidance and encouragement.

I have also availed fully the services of a number of important libraries in the country. The Maulana Azad Library of the Aligarh Muslim University; the National Archives of India, New Delhi; the Nehru Museum and Library, New Delhi; Dr. Zakir Husain Library of the Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi and their staff gave me all help in the preparation of this study. I am beholden to Mr. M. H. Razvi (Librarian), Mr. Ishrat Ali Qureshi, Mrs. Mumtaz Nasir (Deputy Librarians); Mr. Aftab Ahmad, Mr. Abul Hashim, Mr. Ziauddin Ansari and Mr. Abdul Majid of the Maulana Azad Library; Dr. S. A. I. Tirmizi, Mr. Shiv Kumar Dogra and Mr. Ram Niwas of the National Archives of India, Mr. Sartaj Abidi, Mrs. Indu Jolly, Mr. R. P. Keshyap, Mr. T. P. Majumdar, Miss Humera Khalida of Nehru Museum and Library and Mr. Shahabuddin Ansari and Mr. Irfan Beg Noori of Jamia Millia. I am also thankful to Capt. Iftikhar Ahmad Khan, Dr. S.A.H. Bilgrami, Dr. A. F. Usmani, Dr. Mrs Razia Khan, Syed Ameer Ahmad and Syed Shamim Ahmad, Mr. Nafis Ahmad Usmani, Mr. Mirza Mahboob Beg who facilitated my task.

Shan Muhammad

August 1979
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Aligarh.

INTRODUCTION

In the brilliant galaxy of men and women whom India has produced, few can compare with the two brothers, Shaukat Ali and Mohamed Ali, popularly known as the Ali Brothers, who fought the greatest colonial power then existing, with simple-minded devotion, in the first half of the twentieth century so that India may gain its freedom. Born in a family belonging to Rampur, which in every sense of the word was conservative, the Ali Brothers, contrary to all expectations, received western education. They were men of a verstile genius, and played a great part in the Indian attempt to throw off the foreign yoke. They were great orators and still greater journalists. Their disregard of worldly comfort, their sacrifices in the cause of India's freedom, and their persistence in pursuing the goal most dear to them won them the tribute and affection of their countless countrymen.

Shaukat Ali, the elder brother, and Mohamed Ali, the younger, were given English education by their farsighted mother, Abadi Bano Begum, who had foreseen the likely impact of western education on the development of a liberal outlook in India. Though their uncle had refused to give them any money for English education, the lady mortgaged almost all her landed property and sent them to the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College, Aligarh, founded by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in the second half of the nineteenth century with a view to impart English education to Muslims who were educationally backward. They graduated from this college. Mohamed Ali showed exceptional brilliance throughout his college career, and stood first in the B.A. examination of the Allahabad University. He later proceeded to Lincoln College, Oxford, for further studies to better his chances in the coveted Indian Civil Service examination.

At Aligarh the discourses on Islam of the great orientalist, Shibli, which Mohamed Ali first attended surreptitiously because he was considered too young to benefit by them, but to which he was later

admitted in view of his unusual understanding and perception, left a lasting influence on him. At Oxford also, with an Honours degree in Modern History, he devoted himself more to the history of Islam rather than to prepare for the I.C.S. examination. As a result he failed in this examination, and instead of entering the Indian Civil Service, he joined service in his own State of Rampur, and later in the Baroda State where his brother was already employed as an officer in the Opium Department.

This served as a stepping stone in Mohamed Ali's career. He made considerable administrative reforms in the department which was in his charge and won a distinguished place in the administration of the State. But he could not reconcile himself to the limited sphere of activities in a small State. He wanted a wider circle where he might come face to face bigger issues. His writings in the *Times of India* made him unpopular in the official circles. A circular asking State officials to refrain from expressing opinions which may create revolutionary tendencies among the people was issued. Mohamed Ali was already dissatisfied with things in the State and this circular enabled him to make up his mind about himself quickly. He left the State service and entered into politics.

The development of political ideas in Mohamed Ali dates back to his sojourn at the M.A.O. College, Aligarh. The increasing influence of the English staff in the college, their neglect of the duties and intervention in the college affairs had disturbed a section of the enlightened Muslims who did not like British domination in their educational institution. One of the aims of Sir Syed in founding the M.A.O. College was to create an atmosphere of cordial relations between the Muslims and the Government. But the English staff went much further, and started dictating politics for which they found official support. The dawn of the twentieth century found the college administration and the English staff at loggerheads. Estrangement between the two became increasingly evident. The English staff did not also pull on well with the students and the Indian staff.

Mohamed Ali, even long after leaving college, was still in close touch with the student community at Aligarh. His letters to the *Times of India* reflected the growing estrangement between the English staff and the students which resulted in the Student Strike of 1907. This perturbed the British bureaucracy for the first time. How far Mohamed Ali's writings in the press were responsible for

the strike is still a debatable question, but there can be no doubt that these writings indirectly provoked the students. Though Mohamed Ali himself denied having played any role in the strike yet in the official reports he was a suspect and one of the instigators of the strike. Mohamed Ali in a letter dated February 8, 1908 to Gokhale reveals that he was held responsible for the student strike by the Government and had been black-listed. 'I slept an ordinary man one night.' he wrote, 'and rose the next morning a full blown "agitator" or "patriot." Viqar-ul-Mulk was accepted as the Honorary Secretary of the College, but the Government of Sir John Hewett indirectly instructed the Nawab that Mohamed Ali would not be his Assistant Secretary. Shaukat Ali was transferred from Aligarh to Banaras by way of punishment for having a hand in the student unrest. The wrath of the Government was great and Mohamed Ali feared that 'We two brothers will shortly fill the vacancies that have occurred at Mandalay.' He even wrote to Gokhale to seek 'a few hints as to the proper department for the deportees.'

Muslim India had already awakened from a long slumber on the announcement of John Morley in the House of Commons about the introduction of some reforms in the legislative bodies of India. The agitation of the Hindus against the partition of Bengal and the resignation of Sir Bampfylde Fuller, the Governor of Muslim Bengal, had already frightened the Muslims against the designs of the majority and a restlessness prevailed among the Muslim masses. Mohsin-ul-Mulk wrote to Principal Archbold of the M.A.O. College, Aligarh, who was staying those days at Simla that Morley's announcement had revolutionised the entire Muslim community and that the time had come when something should be done to secure its rights from the Government. "I find," he wrote "that Mohammedan feeling is very much changed, and I am constantly getting letters using emphatic language and saying that the Hindus have succeeded owing to their agitation, and the Mohammedans have suffered for their silence." He asked him to find out if it would be possible to present an address to the Viceroy, and this exercise resulted firstly in the organisation of the Simla Deputation and finally in the formation of the All-India Muslim League at Dacca on December 30, 1906.

Dissatisfaction among the Muslims was great and Mohamed Ali in his letter, mentioned above to Gokhale, had already drawn his attention to this. He felt that the Muslim view-point had not been properly understood and it had ultimately resulted in the deteriorat-

ing relations between the two major communities. The Bombay Town Hall meeting about Transvaal held in February 1908 in which all sections of the Indian people had whole-heartedly participated had touched him and the 'meeting' suggested to him the possibility of a working unity between the various interests of the country. "I am sorry," he wrote to Gokhale, "that my Hindu friends have opposed hitherto the desire of the Musalmans to secure independent representation. To talk of unity in this connection is absurd. Each community if it feels that it is an 'interest' by itself and cannot trust another to choose its representative, must be allowed to choose its own and if that community is based on a racial, religious or caste difference its desire should be considered quite as legitimate as if the difference was occupational. Unity will not come if the Musalmans are refused the permission to select their own advocates in litigation as unfortunately much of our politics is at present. Men in your position should, I believe, express their opinion clearly and forcibly on such a point..." This view he held and advocated right from 1908 to the end of his life.

Forced by the need to have an English paper to represent Muslim grievances and keeping in view the way politics developed in India, Mohamed Ali took to journalism as a life long career. It is wrong to say as Robinson puts it that Mohamed Ali drifted to journalism for 'making money' and created issues after issues to quicken the sale of his paper *The Comrade*. No genuine effort has been made to study his ideas. Mohamed Ali earnestly wanted to devote himself to the service of his community and country. When once asked as to why he had adopted journalism as a profession, he replied that the circumstances of his community and the country had impelled him to have recourse to journalism. He said : 'We are partisans of none, comrades of all. We deeply feel the many dangers of increasing controversy between races and races, creeds and creeds, and earnestly desire an understanding between the contending element of the body-politic of India.'

The strained relation that existed between the ruler and the ruled were also to be patched up. 'The line of demarcation between the two should be obliterated and the smooth relation should come out.' More than anyone else Mohamed Ali knew the growing estrangement between the Hindus and the Musalmans. The *Comrade* intended to work out a real Hindu-Muslim *entente*, for a united nationality.

Keeping all this in mind Mohamed Ali left Baroda on two years leave without pay as the Gaekwad was most unwilling to accept his resignation. This was a serious departure from an easy going life to a more thorny one, and though very lavish offers from other states were made to him and a bulky telegram pressing him to accept the minister's post in Jawra State in the erstwhile Central India was received by him, but he was much more inclined to adopt such an uncertain career, as journalism.

Like Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Mohamed Ali too did not think of meddling in politics of other Muslim countries of the world. To quote his own words : 'When I first thought of making this change in my career I did not expect that any but a small fraction of my attention and energies would be attracted by Muslim politics outside the confines of my own country.' Circumstances, however, impelled him to devote himself to the question of the sovereignty of some of the Muslim countries. In 1911-12 the Tripoli and the Balkan issues made him restless when Italy and other European powers were determined to overthrow the Turkish and Arab domination in the spirit of the crusade. The eclipse of Muslim rule in Tripoli and the Balkans had greatly affected him and his feeling during the disasterous days of the Balkan War had so over-powered him that he even 'contemplated suicide.' The Kanpur mosque crisis further aggravated the fears of the Muslim community that they were being treated as a humiliated and weak community.

The ferment among the Muslims was great. A new party among them had emerged which imbibed the ideal of Pan-Islamism. Its members were radicals who had vowed to sacrifice everything that they possessed for maintaining the safety and sanctity of the holy places of Islam. An organisation was formed which was called the Anjuman-e-Khuddam-e-Kaaba. It was the first move on the part of the Muslims of India to save their holy places from Christian aggression. But the most important effect of all these incidents on Muslims was that the constitution of the All-India Muslim League was revised. Mr. (later Sir) Wazir Hasan, Secretary of the League, in a circular letter sent to the Muslim representatives all over the country, wrote about the desired change and reiterated that the Muslim community could no longer be silent about their educational needs and political rights. The Muslim League Council meeting of December 31, 1912 at Bankipur very clearly stated this object as 'to protect and advance the political and other rights and interests of the Indian Musalmans'

and also 'the attainment under the aegis of the British crown of a ystem of self-government suitable to India.'

The British conservative opinion was not unaware of this important change in the constitution of the League and its spokesman *The Times*, commented on the new trends in Muslim political leadership. "The leaders of the Muslim community," it wrote, "at the present moment are the men who inflame religious passions, who promote racial antagonism, who lose no opportunity of abusing British rule and vilifying the Christian religion, are men of much the same stamp as are the extremists of the Hindu school." The paper condemned the new leadership but realised that the British bureaucracy was confronted by a new situation in India which was much to their disadvantage.

The Kanpur mosque incident had already annoyed the Muslims vhere a portion of the Machli Bazar mosque was forcibly demolished y the Kanpur *municipality and the Muslims' representation* was urned down. Correspondence between Mohamed Ali and the Government officials took place and finding himself helpless, Mohamed Ali led a deputation to London to present the whole case o the Home Government. Lord Hardinge realised the gravity of the ituation and restored the demolished portion of the mosque to the Musalmans.

In 1914 the World War I started in Europe and Turkey sided vith Germany. Mohamed Ali appealed to the Turkish leaders to e neutral. The *Comrade* in one of its editorials said : 'The men in ower at Constantinople today are the ablest and most devoted atriots that have directed the destinies of the Ottoman Empire in nodern times...The Turkish declaration of neutrality means that they e convinced that they would best serve the interests of the Ottoman Empire by keeping it as far as possible out of the general conflaation in Europe.' Contrary to the expectations, Turkey acted otherwise and joined Germany. This created a very embarassing situation or the Muslims in India. On the one hand was their religious loyalty the Sultan of Turkey whom they accepted as their Caliph, while n the other they were supposed to bear secular loyalty to the king f England whose subjects they were. The British Government knew nis and brisk correspondence was going on among the top British fficials in India and in England regarding the attitude of Muslim ndia. But strangely enough, the Muslims of India were not agitated

to any great extent on Turkey's joining the Axis powers but continued to express the loyalty to the Government. Even Mohamed Ali in the *Comrade* wrote: "From the point of view of Indian Moslems as loyal and peace-loving subjects of His Majesty the King Emperor, we are confident no further assurances are needed on their part...... They are ready to do their part in manly and ungrudging spirit and make any sacrifices that the exacting and growing demands of the situation may from time to time entail. They have no difficulty in recognising that this is a mere secular conflict having unfortunately arisen out of the hopeless muddle of the European situation. They may sympathise with the Turks in their difficulties, but are not bound by any temporal or spiritual obligation to back them in every mundane quarrel of theirs which might as often as not be the fruit of a bad and blundering policy. Whatever the Turkish case may be in the present crisis, the Indian Musalmans are fully aware that it does not bear any religious character." Thus Mohamed Ali had reconciled to the British in spite of his former differences with them. But the statements of Lloyd George and Asquith created doubts in the minds of the Muslims about the aims of the Allies. It was also realised even by the Viceroy who in a letter to the Governor of Bombay pointed out to the undiplomatic statements of the British Cabinet ministers. These statements had been a matter of great concern to the Muslims in India and Mohamed Ali as a leader of the radicals, a man who had clearly indicated the attitude of Muslim India was forced to revise his stand, and in the *Comrade* wrote: "...Let us repeat that whatever England may do to Turkey or Egypt, our anchor holds. All truly loyal people have closed the chapter of civic controversy with the officials and into the books they are likely to look no more. Whatever our grievances, whatever reforms we desire, everything must wait for a more reasonable occasion. Even if the Government were to concede to us all that we ever desired or dreamt, if for instance, the Moslem University were offered to us on our own terms, or the Press Act repeal were to be announced, or even if Self-Government were to be conceded to us, we would humbly tell Government this is no time for it, and we must for the present decline such concessions with thanks. Concessions are asked for and accepted in peace. We are not Russian Poles. We need no bribes." For writing seditious articles in the *Comrade* and the *Hamdard* the Ali Brothers were interned, and a harsh treatment was meted out to them. Their source of income was closed and they had to live on a very mearge pension. But they were happy and considered it an

honour to be in this condition. In a letter dated February 18, 1916 to MacDonald, Mohamed Ali wrote : "In fact I am glad that I am tasting some of the first fruits of a nation's fight for freedom."

The World War I had ended in 1918 with Allied victory but the release of the Ali Brothers was still being debated among the British officials. The Government released them in December and they immediately rushed to Amritsar to participate in the Congress and League Annual Sessions. They were accorded a rousing reception and the speeches they made in the Congress and the League sessions made the audience weep. The immediate concern of the Brothers was the threatened dismemberment of Turkey which the British had planned secretly in order to wipe out that great Islamic state. The whole of the Indian nation was seething with discontent for one reason or another. The end of the war brought a good deal of sufferings to the people of India. Punjab being the worst affected by the war raised a great hue and cry and it therefore became the target of British barbarity. The Rowlatt Bills and the Jallianwala Bagh incident made Hindus and the Muslims both suffer equally. Their only weapon was appeals, which were seldom listened to.

Even before the release of the Ali Brothers, the whole of Muslim India had stood like one man to protest against the threatened dismemberment of Turkey and demanded the redemption of pledges given by the British Government. Meetings were held and resolutions passed in support of Turkey in every corner of India. The Ali Brothers led a deputation to the Viceroy and finally to the Government of England to make it clear that on no portion of Jazirat-ul-Arab (the Arabian peninsula) non-Muslim control would be tolerated. "Islam", the deputation said, "has ever associated temporal power with the Khilafat. We therefore consider that to make the Sultan a mere puppet would add insult to injury and would only be understood by Indian Muslims as a conspiracy of the Christian powers." They demanded the restoration of the *status quo ante* enabling the Khalifa and the Commander of the Faithful to defend the faith. But neither in India nor in England any heed was paid to the representations. This forced the Ali Brothers to start the Khilafat Movement in India. Gandhiji with his Non-cooperation movement took sides with the Muslims and both the movements gave great strength to India's fight for freedom. To Gandhi the Khilafat issue was a question of life and death to the Muslims of India and to have 'Indian National Unity' the Hindus could not stand aside

silently. He exhorted the Hindus to make common cause with the Muslims and further declared that as a Hindu desiring to live on the closest terms of friendship with his Musalman brethern and believing their cause to be just he would be an unworthy Indian if he did not stand by them in their hour of need.

The Khilafat and Non-cooperation movements created a great stir in the country. *Hartals* in defiance of authority became a common features of the day and thousands of people went to jail. In the Karachi session of the All-India Khilafat Committee in 1921 Mohamed Ali went even to the extent of appealing to the Muslim soldiers to sever all connection with the army and serve the cause of the Khilafat. An Urdu poem *Sada-e-Khatoon*, expressing the sentiments of the Ali Brothers' mother, a revered old lady, was the current rage all over the country and was sung at every street corner. It opened with the line :

بولیں اماں محمد علی کی
جان بیٹا خلافت پہ دے دو

The *Ulema* were united and issued an agreed *Fatwa* signed by thousands of them and laying down that :

(a) It was not permissible to become a member of the Government Councils.

(b) It was not permissible to plead as Vakil before the British courts.

(c) It was not permissible to read in Government or semi-Government schools.

(d) It was not permissible to keep Honorary Magistracies, Honorary posts and the titles conferred by the Government.

(e) All Government services by which Government was helped were forbidden (*haram*), specially serving in the police and the army was a great sin etc.

Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew, a leading Khilafatist, published a 'draft programme' for Muslims appealing to them to join the Congress and to make common cause with the other communities. The establishment of the National University (Jamia Millia) at Aligarh and the Moplah revolt in the south were the off-shoots of the Khilafat

movement. While the former aimed at infusing a new spirit of nationalism among the youths, the latter almost did away with British supremacy in the remotest part of the country. Though the Moplah revolt was brutally suppressed, it made the English masters realise to what extent even a subject nation could go. For all this the Ali Brothers were held responsible. They were arrested, tried and awarded rigorous imprisonment. Gandhi asked Hindus and Muslims to retain amity, and in a message to them on the arrest of the Ali Brothers said that their arrest was a prelude to Swaraj. So close were the two communities at that time that Mr. Abbas Tyabji, chairman of the Reception Committee of the Fourteenth Session of the All-India Muslim League held at Ahmadabad in December 1921, said that the League should cease to be a separate body and that it should merge itself in the Congress.

But contrary to expectations, communal riots broke out and they gave a severe blow to communal unity. In 1923 when Mohamed Ali was released he found the whole of India in flames and though his efforts lessened the riots they could not totally stop them. For the great services rendered by Mohamed Ali to the country he was selected to preside over the 38th session of the Indian National Congress. The same honour had already been conferred on him in absentia in 1917 by the All-India Muslim League.

His presidential address to the Congress was a mirror of his nationalism. He discouraged the use of violence for achieving freedom and was convinced that a nation struggling for emancipation from foreign domination must resort to non-violent means. The Hindu-Muslim question never disturbed him. He was of the opinion that when India would become free, every section forming the Indian nation would be an equal partner in the freedom. In his own words : "Our Swaraj must be the Raj of all, and, in order to be that, it must have been won through the willing sacrifice of all...Swaraj must be won by the minimum sacrifice of the maximum number." Besides, issues like cow-killing and music before mosques were the important subjects he touched upon in his address and appealed to both the communities to unite as pre-requisite for Swaraj.

The post-1923 era saw a number of All-Parties conferences to meet the British challenge that Indians were inadequate to prepare a constitution for themselves. This finally led to the framing of a constitution which came to be known as the Nehru Report after

Pandit Motilal Nehru, chairman of the committee. The national convention which finally met in Calcutta to approve of the Report represented almost every leading political party. Mohamed Ali also participated in it. He differed from some section of the Report and represented the views of the minorities. Jinnah also felt that the Report did not give sufficient safeguards to the Muslims. It should be remembered that till then Jinnah was a nationalist and always pleaded the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity. Only fifteen years earlier when Sir Wazir Hasan and Mohamed Ali had persuaded him to join the Muslim League he said that his membership of the League should not be an obstacle in the wider interest of the National Congress. Jinnah was hailed as an ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity by no less a person than Sarojini Naidu and was acclaimed as one of the architects of the Lucknow Pact. Now that very man was opposed to the Nehru Report and thought that the interest of the minorities had not been properly safeguarded in it. But his writings and speeches as well as those of Mohamed Ali went unheeded, and this led to a parting of the ways between them and the Congress. Both left the Congress, never to come back to it again. In the Round Table Conference that followed, Mohamed Ali held the same views. Arguing the case of the minorities in an independent India he put up a plan for safeguarding their interests and told the conference that the interests of the minorities could adequately be protected only by providing them substantial safeguards in the constitution.

Mohamed Ali was severely ill when he participated in the conference. The strain which he had to undergo ultimately became unbearable. A few days earlier he had made the prophetic statement at the conference : "I want to go back to my country if I can go back with the substance of freedom in my hand. Otherwise I will not go back to a slave country, and if you do not give us freedom in India, you will have to give me a grave here." The prophecy proved to be true and Mohamed Ali died while the conference was still in session.

The secession of Mohamed Ali from the Congress had led historians and publicists to paint him as a communal and separatist leader. But it is far from the truth. Right from 1906 the year he entered politics to 1931, when he died, Mohamed Ali stood for Hindu-Muslim unity and fought for the independence of the country. He had to undergo untold sufferings, including several long prison terms, but he took everything in his stride and never deviated from

the path he had chosen for himself. He fought for Swaraj and continued his battle even on his death-bed in a foreign land. In his own words : 'To live for a great cause, and live up to it, is perhaps harder than to die for it.'

An ardent supporter of Hindu-Muslim unity he was a great believer in peace between two communities. Religion was to him a matter of internal faith and every one was free to follow his own inclination. He was of opinion that religion and politics were two different things but were interdependent. Probably he was convinced of the truth of a verse of Iqbal who said :

جُدا ہو دیں سیاست سے تو رہ جاتی ہے چنگیزی

(If politics is separated from religion, it degenerates into gangsterism)

But one's belief in one's religion should not obstruct the development of harmonious relation between different communities following different faiths. In his own words : 'Where God commands I am a Muslim first, a Muslim second and a Muslim last, and nothing but a Muslim. My first duty is to my Maker, not to His Majesty the king. But where India's freedom is concerned, where the welfare of India is concerned, I am an Indian first, an Indian second, and Indian last and nothing but an Indian.'

Mohamed Ali passed away in London. His prophetic words came true. He did not return to a slave country and was laid to eternal rest in Jerusalem in the court-yard of Masjid-ul-Aqsa, the second holiest mosque of Islam. Iqbal paid him the highest tribute :

خاکِ قدس او را بہ آغوشِ تمنّا در گرفت
سوئے گردوں رفت زاں راہے کہ پیغمبر گزشت

(The holy land took him in its yearning embrace. He went to Heaven by the path the Prophet had taken).

Mohamed Ali's death left Shaukat Ali a forlorn figure but he continued to fight for freedom of the country from different platforms. He too passed away in 1938 and was buried in the Lal Qila grounds

near the Jama Masjid, Delhi. It is unfortunate that his patriotic services to the country have not been duly recognised. His epitaph truly depicts the helplessness of this great patriot.

فاتحہ مرقدِ ویراں پہ بھی پڑھتے جائیں
اُن سے کہدو جو ہیں اِس رہ سے گزرنے والے

(Ask those who have to pass this way to tarry and
say *Fateha* on my desolate grave).

CONTENTS

1

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO G.K. GOKHALE[1]

(Unpublished)

Rampur State (U.P.)
27 January 1907

Dear Sir,

Just a line to remind you of your promise to visit Aligarh[2] in February. I was there for a week about the middle of this month and people were generally pleased to learn that you intended coming there.

I am going there again by the end of this month as Mr. Muogaokar, I.C.S. Judge of Broach[3] is coming there for 4 days with some

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1. Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915) joined the Indian National Congress in 1889 and in 1895 he became its joint secretary. In 1899 and 1902 he was elected a member of the Bombay Legislative Council and was made a C.I.E. in 1904. He founded the Servant of India Society in 1905. He represented the moderate views in the Congress.
2. Aligarh is a small city in Uttar Pradesh. It came into prominence with Sir Syed Ahmad Khan who founded Muhammadan-Anglo-Oriental College here in 1877 to provide modern education to the Muslims of India. The tiny college grew into a University in 1920 and is known as Aligarh Muslim University.
3. Mr Muogaokar was a member of the Indian Civil Service and acted as judge in many courts of Central India. He was a friend of Gokhale.

of my Mahratta friends of H.H. the Gaekward's service from Baroda.[4]

I wonder whether it would be convenient for you to pay the College a visit at that time. At any rate I should feel obliged if you would inform me when you are likely to be there.

Yours truly
MOHAMED ALI
(of H.H. the Gaekward's Civil Service)

Source:
Gokhale Papers F.No. 341

4. This refers to Sir Aayaji Rao III Maharaja Gaekward Shamshir Bahadur of Baroda, a state in Central India during the British rule. He was installed in 1875 and was looked after by a council of Regency during his minority. He took charge of his state in 1881. He was an enlightened ruler and visited Europe several times.

2

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO G.K. GOKHALE

(Unpublished)

No. 13. Grant Court
M.A.O. College
Aligarh
4 February 1907

Dear Sir,

I wrote to you from Rampur a few days ago and then came over here to await the arrival of Mr. Muogaokar of Broach and Mr. Jadav of Baroda. They haven't yet turned up. I was going away to Rampur but hear that you are shortly expected to be here. So I am delaying my departure. Will you let me know definitely the date of your arrival here and the length of your stay at Aligarh. I shall be greatly obliged, if my friends of the "Servants of India Society"[1] are with you, kindly convey my regards to them. I hope to see them again here.

Yours v. truly
MOHAMED ALI

P.S.

I am sending for the favour of consideration and opinion an address I delivered in 1904 on the proposed Mohamedan University.[2]

1. The Servant of India Society was an organisation founded by Gokhale on June 12, 1905 whose object was the welfare of the people and service of the country.
2. The Address was delivered to the Annual Session of the Muhammadan Educational Conference held in 1904 at Lucknow.

It is not the pride of the author but the patriotism of the citizen that compels me to ask the favour. It would be more convenient if you were fully acquainted with the ideals of Aligarh before you verified them by actual scrutiny. m.a.

Source:
Gokhale Papers F. No. 341.

3

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO G.K. GOKHALE

(*Unpublished*)

Sidhpur
N. Gujrat
8 February 1908

Dear Mr. Gokhale,

By the time this reaches you a year would have passed almost to a day since our last meeting at Aligarh. The period that has elapsed has been one of storm and stress even for so "loyal" a man as myself. The "loyalists" among whom I do not number many friends have done all in their powers to throw the blame of the Aligarh strike[1] on me. But you know the facts better than most of them. I have been honoured by being put down on the "Black list" of the Government of Sir John Hewett[2] who has begged the Nawab of Ram-

1. In 1907 there was a student strike in the M.A.O. College, Aligarh. It was felt by the student that the English staff of the college was acting as agents of the government and it annoyed them very much. The immediate cause of the strike was a quarrel between some constable and the students of the college which led to the rustication of a few senior students of the college.
2. Sir John P. Hewett (1854-1941), Lieut. Governor of U.P., 1907-12. He was a very senior administrative officer.

pur[3]-my chief-to keep me quiet as "he has given us a lot of trouble." I slept an ordinary man one night and rose the next morning a full blown "agitator" or "patriot." Only recently when death removed the loveable personality of Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk[4] from the Moslem world and made the work of the reformer easier by sparing him the unpleasant duty of removing a weak man from a most important position at a critical moment, men were put up to oppose our nominee, the upright and strong Viqar-ul Mulk.[5] But when the voice of the community was clearly heard to be on his side Sir John put the best face on the matter and welcomed the new-comer but wanted to take the all-important pledge that "Mohamed Ali would not be your Assistant Secretary." Viqur-ul-Mulk, be it said to his credit, refused to give a written pledge and evaded the question in conversation also. For the sake of Viqar-ul-Mulk, however, I am "lying low" as he has to make his position unassailable. We have great hopes from him and I am sure if you wished to know him you would find in him an honest, upright and bold man who is at the same time level

3. Hamid Ali Khan, Nawab of Rampur (1875-1930) succeeded his father Nawab Mushtaq Ali Khan in 1889. He was a patron of the Aligarh College and helped it lavishly but withdrew his financial aid to the College when it turned anti-British. From the very beginning the whole family of the Nawab was pro-British and till the end of his life he endeavoured to uphold British supremacy in India. It was because of this that he turned hostile to Ali Brothers.
4. Mehdi Ali Khan (1837-1917) popularly known as Mohsin-ul-Mulk. He joined the Government of Nizam sometimes in 1874 and retired in 1893 from the post of Financial and Political Secretary. For his services to the state of Hyderabad he was given the titles of Mohsin-ud-Dowla, Moshin-ul-Mulk, Muneer Nawaz Jung by the Nizam. He supported Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in his educational movement.
5. Mushtaq Husain (1841-1917) is popularly known as Viqar-ul-Mulk. He also joined the Government of Nizam and held very responsible posts there. For his services to the state he was awarded the titles of Nawab Viqar-ud-Dowla, Viqar-ul-Mulk, Intisar Jung Bahadur. He succeeded Mohsin-ul-Mulk as the Secretary of the M.A.O. College, Aligarh.

headed and far-sighted. I intend to ask Sir John Hewett for an interview and let him have a bit of my mind in my most "respectful and humble" manner. His latest piece of work is the re-transfer of my brother[6] to Benares, who was only a few weeks ago transferred—not to his own request—to Aligarh and Etah.[7] As he is under the Bengal Government the first transfer to Aligarh was not known to Sir John till it was a *fait accompli*.

All this must be strange to you, but the poor Mosalmans give me up for lost and think that we two brothers will shortly fill the vacancies that have occurred at Mandalay.[8] Your friend Mr. Lajpatrai[9] ought to give me a few hints as to the proper department for the deportees.

I have not improved matters by writing the articles,[10] which I have put under one cover now, on the subject of the discontent. But as I have told my Aligarh friends, if I carry a loaded revolver in one pocket, I carry a license in the other. The Revolver is a letter from Mr. Keir Hardie[11] in which he has actually burst into poetry in

6. Maulana Shaukat Ali, (1873-1938), the elder brother of Mohamed Ali. He graduated from the M.A.O. College and was appointed an assistant opium agent at Baroda; founded Khuddam-i-Ka'ba; arrested in 1915 along with his younger brother, Mohamed Ali; took active part in the freedom movement in India.
7. Benares and Etah are the two important cities of U.P.
8. Mandalay is the capital of Burma.
9. Lala Lajpat Rai (1865-1928) was a great freedom fighter of India. He studied at Ludhiana and Ambala and taught for sometime in the D.A.V. College. He visited England as delegate of the Indian National Congress to educate British public opinion about political aspirations of the Indians.
10. Mohamed Ali wrote a number of essays on the political discontent in India. These articles were later on compiled and were entitled *Thoughts on the Present Discontent* published from Bombay in 1907.
11. Keir Hardie (1856-1915) was an Independent Labour M.P. 1892-95 and 1900-15. He advocated self-government for India and was therefore named by the British conservative papers as 'The Mischief Monger.'

complimenting me. The other—the License—is a letter from H.E. the Viceroy, not only expressing sympathy—that much used and still more abused word—but "hearty agreement with much that put forward" and wishing "the book the wide circulation it desires." I sent you a copy of the booklet with a couple of articles on Aligarh—the seine of Satan. I trust you will accept the booklet as a humble offering from an admirer of yours. I enclose another copy for my friend Mr. Deodhar,[11a] who may be with you. I should like to hear occasionally from him—I dare not say "you also" as I know how busy you are and do not wish to deprive India of moment just to benefit only one of her sons. Don't you think that an effort should be made to understand the Mohamedan point of view, now that the extremists are no more with you to frighten the timid among us? I was touched at the sight of Hindus, Musalmans and Parsees all one heart and one mind in the Bombay Town Hall when the meeting about Transvaal[12] was held last week. I should have to utter just a couple of words if only to associate the "loyalists" of Northern India with the righteous agitation. But I was too late in writing to Sir Phirozshah Mehta[13] and though some impromptu speakers urged their claims and were allowed to appear in print the next morning in the papers, I did not feel inclined to take advantage of the opening. But the meeting suggested to me

11a. G.K. Deodhar was a friend of Gokhale and a founder member of the Servant of India Society.

12. Transvaal is a place in South Africa. It was here that the Transvaal Immigrants Restriction Bill was passed by the Transvaal Assembly with the object of restricting the entry of the Indians into South Africa. Gandhiji agitated against this.

13. Sir Phiroz Shah Mehta (1845-1915) was a very brilliant student of the Elphinston College, Bombay. He proceeded to England in 1864 to join Lincoln's Inn and was called to the Bar in 1868. Dadabhai Naoroji exercised great influence on him. He is remembered today as the maker of modern Bombay Municipal Corporation. He held very high position in the Indian National Congress and belonged to the moderate school of thought in the Congress. He presided over the Calcutta session of the Congress in 1890. He was awarded C.I.E. and K.C.S.I. in 1894 and 1904 respectively.

the possibility of a working unity-not the sentimental rubbish that is too often talked on the subject-between the various "interests" (not properly called races or religions or sects) of India. It cannot be brought about cheap sneers like the one of Sir Phirozshah when putting forward the claims of the Aga Khan[14] to be the Chairman and saying in an unmistakable tone that the Aga was "not a Hindu." I rather liked the dignified but passionate retort of the Aga that he would rather have stood over there on the Hall and shouted lustily and cheered loudly each speaker on the subject of our just grievances than simply sit there in the Presidential chair. Now a Hindu may be unjustly regarded as a synonym for as edition-monger today, but such suspicions are not unique. "The Mosalmans (of India) are, and have been for many years, a source of chronic danger to the British power in India. . .Mohamedan masses drink in eagerly poisoned teachings of the Apostles of Insurrection." These were the words of Sir William Hunter,[15] the official historian of India who was regarded all over the country as a friend, or at least by no means an enemy of Islam and the Mosalmans. Such were the caluminies we had to face and I fear our Hindu compatriots did not always spare us, nor scrupled to take advantage of the position in which we were placed. So the whirlining of time has brought the change harmful to them. Can they not learn thereby to be more just in dealing with rival interests. To expect the Mosalmans—already half starving for want

14. Aga Khan (1877-1957) held very responsible position among the Indian Muslims because of his being the religious head of the Ismaili Muhammedans. He attended the coronation darbar in 1902 as a guest of the English nation. He was conferred the titles of K.C.S.I. in 1898 and G.C.I.E. in 1902. He was a member of the Governor-General's Legislative Council. He led the famous Simla Deputation in 1906. A great supporter of the Aligarh Muslim University movement and helped a lot in its foundation.
15. Sir William Wilson Hunter (1840-1900) I.C.S., was chosen by Lord Mayo to organise a statistical survey of Indian Empire in 1869. He acted as the Additional Member of the Governor-General's Legislative Council 1881-7 and President of the Education Commission, 1882-83; Member of the Indian Finance Commission, 1886; Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, 1886. He retired in 1887 and settled near Oxford.

of Government recognition—to resist the temptation and refuse to swallow the bait covering the hook is to ask too much from human nature when the Mosalmans see that the same bait has all along been easily swallowed by those who moralise over the sad end of the guilty fish that is greedy and gullible.

I am sorry that my Hindu friends have opposed hitherto the desire of the Mosalmans to secure independent representation. To talk of unity in this connection is absurd. Each community if it feels that it is an "interest" by itself and cannot trust another to choose its representative must be allowed to choose its own and if that community is based on a racial, religious, or caste difference, its desire should be considered quite as legitimate as if the difference was occupational. Unity will not come if the Mosalmans are refused the permission to select their own advocates in litigation—as unfortunately much of our politics is at present. Men in your position should, I believe, express their opinions clearly and forcibly on such a point. Territorialism or Provincialism is non-existence in India. At any rate the present divisions of the country into Provinces does not correspond with the sentiment that is territorial, such as Behar sentiment or Rohilkhand[16] sentiment. Further, idea of territorialism is much more practical and rational; we have to recognise "denominational interests", for practical politics is concerned with things as they are statesmanship which in its idealism thinks of only what ought to be and forgets what cannot successful.

A working unity between denominations is possible and I appeal to you to teach your followers to discard meaningless shibboleths and face the situation as it is boldly and wisely. Denominationalism has no terrors for me. Religious differences have not caused half the bloodshed that territorial nationality is causing every day. The campaign of Napolean[17] and now the Russo-Japanese war[18] and the small

16. Bihar is a Province of India and Rohilkhand is an important area in U.P.

17. Napolean was the Emperor of France and fought many battles against the English and established French supremacy temporarily all over Europe.

18. Russo-Japanese War was fought in 1905 in which the Japanese forces defeated the Russians. This had inspired the revolutionaries in India and the fight for independence grew more fierce onwards.

or in the aggregate insignificant wars of Europe or Asia have not been due to denominationalism but to the same territorial patriotism that is held up as our ideal when I look at the unsentimental but quite practical unity of Canada, I am filled with a hope that we may succeed in doing likewise though the magnitude of our task is a far greater—and our differences are far wider. I know how territorialism appeals to the Hindu mind which has hugged it for centuries to itself. But it is unfair to demand the same intensity and fervour in their territorial patriotism from Mosalmans who are and have been for 13 centuries a nation without a country." I fear too little thinking has been bestowed on the question and too much talking—and even too much sentiment. Would you not spare some time for this question and bring to bear on it not only your sincerity and true devotion to the cause—which is the part of you I admire most—but also the powerful brain which the world has learnt to admire? It is not a question that can be settled by any amount of talk or sentiment. We should regard it in its earlier stages as a mere commercial concern which requires not sentiment but business aptitude and level-headedness, not flights of oratory but clear thinking and above all absolute honesty to make it pay". Arguing modestly with a mere business almost as petty—if you like—as a peper and salt concern, we shall in the end have a partnership in all the concerns of our common humanity, a partnership in all joys and in all sorrows. If it is to be a successful business, let us not promise too much in our prospectus. But let us settle how the dividends are to be shared and let us be honest and fair to each other in that. In the three days...... of the Congress there is nothing but fraternity and love and all that; but many of the patriots are as narrow and selfish and as caste-ridden during the remaining 362 days as any Mosalmans whom they denounce as a fanatic. I think men in your position should not be content with a huge mass meeting called the Congress session as a demonstration of a false and fictitious unity—not unfortunately reported at Surat[19]—but should have a powerful representative organisation consisting of some hundred or two hundred men all united on the principal questions. I

19. This refers to the Surat Congress which splitted into two groups-the Extremists and the Moderates in the Congress in 1907 on the questions of means to be adopted for the attainment of independence.

am glad that at last the defection of the Extremists has shown to the Moderates that such an organisation, with a definite system of representation and a definite creed, is necessary. It is with this body that in future the decision of an entente cordiale between Hindus and Mosalmans will rest. And it would be more possible for you to guide the smaller body and restrain it and through it to influence the masses. The spirit of this body should be purified and it should be purged of all narrowness. Its creed should be "Justice to all" even before "India for the Indians." Mosalmans—educated Mosalmans I mean—will have no hesitation in joining you if they could believe all your followers, at least most of them, to be like you, not in brain power, not in industry, but in the the sense of justice to all communities. We should be pardoned if we refuse to believe in the honesty of the declaration of unity of men like Mr. Tilak,[20] Mr. Dutt[21] and Mr. Madan Mohan Malviya.[22] Will any Mosalman in Northern India join a concern the Provincial Branch of which is managed by the man who does not preach boycott of British goods but preaches and practises a boycott of the 10 or 20 p.c. of Arabic and Persian words that have enriched the Hindustani Language of India?

20. Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920) is known as the father of Indian unrest. He contributed regularly to the *Kesari* and the *Mahratta* which roused the people against British Imperialism. In 1906 he demanded swaraj and asked the people to fight for it as a matter of right. The Extremist section of the Congress was led by him.
21. Romesh Chandra Dutt (1848-1909) I.C.S. was educated at Calcutta and London and joined the civil service. He was also a Barrister of the Middle Temple and lectured on India History at the University College, London. He authored many books and won reputation.
22. Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya (1861-1946) was educated at Allahabad and enrolled himself as High Court Pleader, Allahabad. He was a Member of the Provincial Legislative Council 1902-12; President of the Indian National Congress 1909, 1918 and 1932; Member of the Imperial Legislative Council 1910-19; founder and Vice-Chancellor of the Benares Hindu University; founded Hindu Mahasabha, 1923; attended the second session of the Round Table Conference in London in 1931.

Besides, we have no faith in the Bengal or really in the Congress Press. In East Bengal affairs I have verified myself that if a portion of Anglo-Indian Press has taken the side of Mosalmans the whole of the Bengali Press has shown itself to be a Hindu Press from which no Mosalman can expect justice and truth. I may cite a single instance. My brother-in-law[23] came out from England in March and was full of "Congress Patriotism" after his recent friendly association with many Hindus at Oxford and London. He used to quarrel with me for my "lukewarmness." He went to Behar and is now practising there at the Bar. From what he saw of the Bengalees there and what he came to know of things in East Bengal, he became in June of last year the most confirmed of Anti-Congress or rather anti-Bengal man! This in 3 months only!

This letter has passed beyond the limits of a letter and I am not going to inflict more of it on you. But I appeal to you to take advantage of the situation and bring about a rapprochement by learning with patience and application the truth about the outstanding differences between Hindus and Mosalmans in East Bengal, in Northern India and in Sindh. The fight vs. Bureaucracy is a good enough occupation and trial of strength. But the fight against our mutual prejudices is more urgent and a still better trial of fortitude and patient labour. I wish Sir Phirozshah would also leave off his "window—dressing" which may dedule Mr. Keir Hardie but cannot serve to hide the truth from ourselves and instead of .....which the most thorny and intricate of our problems study the question for a couple of years or more in annual cold weather tours during which he could meet the Mosalmans—not the leaders (for with the exception of Viqar-ul-Mulk we have none) but the young men and the "middle-aged" who have received English education or are at heart as patriotic as any fluent Bengali and yet refuse to join the Congress at present.

23. Moazzam Ali graduated from Aligarh and was called to the Bar. He started practice in Patna but shifted to Moradabad. He was a nationalist to the core and took active part in the Khilafat and the Non-Cooperation Movement and thus left his practice. He was a secretary of the Congress and a member of its working committee in 1923.

Do excuse the long riginula regiuarole. When I began the letter, I meant to cover a sheet of paper and now that I count them, I find I have covered nine!

With all good wishes for yourself and compliments to Mr. Deodhar.

Yours sincerely,
MOHAMED ALI

P.S.

Could you introduce me to Sir Phirozshah Mehta as I go to Bombay every fortnight and should like to have a long talk with him.

m.a.

Source:
Gokhale Papers F. No. 341

4

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO SIR JAMES MESTON[1]

(Unpublished)

19th February 1913

My dear Sir James,

Will you forgive me for not acknowledging your very kind letter of the 27th January earlier than this? The fact is I was at Bombay when the letter reached Delhi and on my return. . .I thought the best answer could be my compliance with your desire that I may take off-day and go over to Lucknow to see your Honour. Every day since my return I have been endeavouring to get that off-day and to let you know when I would be in Lucknow but hitherto I have failed and see no chance of success sufficiently definite to inform your Honour.

I shall, however, try my best to run up to Aligarh when you are there and to confirm once more what I have said before as to my anxious desire to cooperate with you and every well-wisher of my country and community in working for their progress. I fear these times are somewhat abnormal and the least difference in point of view is likely to create misunderstanding. But I fell sure that you mean

1. Sir James Meston (1865-1934) K.C.S.I., C.B.E., Secretary to the Finance Department, Government of India, 1906-12; Lieut. Governor of U.P., 1912-18; Imperial War Cabinet, 1917; Finance Member of the Viceroy's Council, 1919.

the same thing and I have every confidence that I can satisfy your Honour that my humble contribution to the work before us is in no way detrimental of the best interests of Government, the country and the Moslem Community.

With very kind regards.

Source:
Mohamed Ali Papers

5

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF THE UNITED PROVINCES

My Dear Sir James,

I have already written to your Honour at only too great a length on Aligarh affairs and now trouble you once more on the subject of the Cawnpore Mosque.[1] The matter has already been noticed by several Urdu papers, and I fear others will take it up immediately. I am somewhat doubtful, as a rule, of the effect of writings in the Vernacular Press on Government officials whose knowledge of the vernaculars is generally poor, and my arrangement is that what is intended for Government should appear in the *Comrade*[2] and what is intended for the people should appear in the *Hamdard*.[3] I, therefore, never contemplated to write in the *Hamdard* on the subject as such writings have a tendency to excite a certain class of people without any compensating effect on Government, but in your Honour's case it is different, for you are well able to read Urdu papers for yourself......

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1. In July 1913 the Kanpur Improvement Trust and Municipality with the help of the armed forces demolished a portion of the Machli Bazar Mosque, situated at A.B. Road. Many representations were made to the government and ultimately Mohamed Ali and Syed Wazir Hasan led a deputation to England to repesent the views of the Muslim community. The demolished portion was restored but it had a far-reaching effect on Muslim politics in India.
2. The *Comrade* was started by Maulana Mohamed Ali in January 1911. It was an English weekly. In its earlier stages it was financed by H.H. the Aga Khan and Rt. Hon. Syed Ameer Ali but later on when Mohamed Ali turned hostile to British, they stopped the finance.
3. It was also started by the Ali Brothers. It was an Urdu weekly.

But to turn to the Cawnpore question, I would certainly have written in the *Comrade* on the subject had it not been that I hoped and still hope, to obtain the same result, and a satisfactory result, without raising a controversy in the Press. So far I have been somewhat disappointed because, inspite of the fact that your Honour considers my request for reconsideration very temperate and appropriate, it has hitherto proved strile of results. But I have not yet lost hope, and once more appeal to your Honour to accept my suggestion and consult some Moslem ulama and lawyers.

It appears to me that more attention has been paid to the question whether the part which the Chairman of the Municipality wishes to demolish is or is not a place used for prayers. What should have been considered first, however, is whether any land or building dedicated to God could be sold or transferred in any other way. I am no theologian, nor much of a lawyer, but I believe it is a well known fact that such property cannot be devoted to any other purpose. If it is so, the demolition of any part of the building is bound to hurt the feelings of us all, and it is for your Honour to judge whether the alignment of a road is worth the price demanded from us. We could have understood the position of the authorities if some important public business was held up on account of the Moslem prejudices. But frankly, I cannot conceive how Moslem feelings can be ignored merely because the Chairman of the Municipality desires to have an alignment of the road geometrically perfect, when he could as well give a curve to the road and save the building together. As a matter of fact, it is my information that if the alignment had been kept straight the mosque would have been left untouched, but that in order to protect a temple a bend of about eight feet was made from a distanace of about 150 feet from the mosque. I questioned the Musalmans of Cawnpore who came to see me very searchingly to detect if there was any trace of ill-feeling towards the Hindus on that account, but I am convinced that they bear no grudge to the Hindus on account of the decision of your Honour to save the temple which is right in the middle of the road. As a matter of fact, they have been throughout most anxious to secure the support of the Hindu members of the Cawnpore Municipal Board, and I rejoice to see that while the Hindus supported the Musalmans in this matter, the Musalmans also accepted the amendment of a Hindu gentleman making the resolution less emphatic than it originally stood on the agenda of the Municipal Board. Even the voting

on the question on the 20th ultimo showed that there were more Hindus for staying the proceedings to enable the Muhammadan members to make further representation to the Government than against. It seems to me that all the driving prower in this matter is coming from the Chairman whose casting vote decided the matter even on the last occasion against the Musalmans.

The statement of the Cawnpore gentlemen, if correct, throws curious light on the way in which the Collector of the District is procuring proof of the fact that the portion which the Chairman of the Municipality desires to demolish is not part of the mosque. They stated that Mr. Tyler[4] without asking anyone went into this portion of the mosque with shoes on, and on his return said that had this been a part of the mosque they would have stopped him from doing so. If this is true it serves the Musalmans of Cawnpore right, for it seems to me that nowhere in the civilized world would a Magistrate select such a distressing method of obtaining evidence and more but the Mussalmans, who are accused by our friend the *Times* of all sorts of things, would quietly tolerate such conduct. I do not know what information your Honour has on the subject, but if Mr. Tyler has offered such evidence I hope your Honour, has also offered him some advice which, if these are the true facts, he evidently needs. Now, as a matter of fact, a Musalman can say his prayers with his boots on if only they are clean according to the Shari'at, but Indian roads, as a rule, are not so clean that the floor of a mosque would remain fit for prayers if the congregation had its boots on. This thought dictated by commonsense has now assumed the form of the convention in India that nobody should enter the mosque with boots on, and for a long time this offered no inconvenience to people, because they generally wore Indian shoes which are really slippers. But in certain mosques Europeans go with their boots on, causing great offence to the Musalmans, and I am given to understand that this practice would be put down by example, if not precept, by no less a person than His Excellency the Viceroy himself, after which let us hope not only the Jam'i Masjid at Delhi but also some sacred places at Agra, where the sightseers go and where they are permitted by Mr. Mardon to go with their boots on if they are non-Moslem, will be spared what has come to be regarded as a sacrilege. But the Musalmans of Cawnpore emphatically de-

4. Mr Tyler was the District Magistrate of Kanpur.

clare that they are prepared to prove it up to the hilt that shoes are never taken into the mosque beyond the steps and that as a matter of fact prayer is offered on the portion sought to be demolished when there is an exceptionally large congregation. At any rate, what I have stated before in one of my telegrams the place used for ablutions is an integral part of the mosque everywhere, and whatever sacredness attaches to the other portions of the mosque attaches to this also.

I understand from information supplied to me that at first the idea was that the temple, which comes right in the middle of the road, should be demolished, but that on the representation of the Hindus the Government rightly spared the temple. It was then considered whether as an alternative scheme a portion of the mosque should be demolished. When your Honour visited Cawnpore in November last the Muhammadan members of the Municipal Board are alleged to have requested your Honour to assure them that this part of the mosque would not be demolished, and I learn from the *Herald of India* that your Honour "assured the members that the temple and mosque will remain untouched by the Improvement Trust." It is alleged that inspite of this assurance the Improvement Trust passed a resolution favouring the acquisition of this part of the mosque in exchange for some land to the north, but that when this resolution came for confirmation before the Board it was postponed on the opposition of the Moslem members. Subsequently Mr. Tyler went to see the mosque and entered this part of it with boots on. Thereafter in a meeting five local *ulama* gave their *Fatwa* that this part of the mosque was an integral portion of the mosque and the meeting accordingly passed the resolution. Afterwards another meeting of the Board took place and for want of previous notice a Moslem member's motion that no part of the mosque be destroyed was ruled out of order. In due course a deputation of some prominent Musalmans waited upon the Collector and requested that this part of the mosque should be spared and gave instance of the Holey Road which was originally aligned in such a manner as to require the demolition of the place reserved for ablutions in the Chhoti I'dgah, but was built according to a different alignment in deference to the wishes of a Moslem deputation which waited on Mr. Holey. I have in my possession a plan of the Holey Road, which shows that the road has spared a portion of the mosque eleven feet in width, which would have been demolished if a geometrically perfect align-

ment had been insisted upon in those days. The road is from 102 to 105 feet in width generally, but where it passes by the mosque it is only ' 4 feet wide in one place and 97 in another. I may mention here that it appears from a plan in my possession of the mosque now in question and the proposed road that the part of the mosque said to be demolished in order to give a perfect alignment to the road is no more than 13½ feet at its greatest width.

What impresses me most is the resolution passed by the Municipal Board at a meeting held on the 1st of April. The requisition for the original resolution was signed by no less than six Hindu members in addition to the four Muhammadan members of the Board. However, two Hindu members proposed an amendment which left out the preamble of the original resolutions, but adhered to the conclusion that no portion of the mosque should be acquired. The Chairman proposed and a European member seconded another amendment desiring that no action be taken, but this was supported by four votes only, while the two Hindu gentlemen's amendment was supported by 13 and was carried, the proposal of the original having exceeded the amendment. It will be very presumptious on my part even to suggest to your Honour that under the circumstances it seems to me that local self-government would be a hollow mockery if the Chairman can still have his way. But I have no doubt that this aspect of the question has appealed to your Honour as much as it has appealed to me.

In the reply given by your Honour's Government to my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Shahid Husain[5] an instance is given of a washing place attached to a mosque having been acquired at Lucknow for improvements of the town. The Cawnpore Musalmans state that if this refers to the two mosques in Moulviganj to the west of the Aminabad Park it is their belief that the part acquired was a separate building and never used for prayers. In any case they contend that the instance of the Holey Road at Cawnpore itself is more to the

5. Shaikh Shahid Husain (1878-1924) was a taluqdar of Gadia in Bara Banki district. He was educated at Cambridge and was called to the Bar. He led an agitation for separate electorate for Muslims in 1909. He was elected to the legislative council in 1923 from the Lucknow and Unnao Muslim rural constituency. He had a good practice at the Oudh Bar.

point, and that even if in one place some Musalmans agreed to the acquisition of a building dedicated to God for being used by Moslems making their ablutions before prayers, such consent cannot bind Musalmans in another place. I also learnt that in a meeting of the Municipal Board held on the 20th May it was only the casting vote of the Chairman which helped him to carry an amendment against staying further proceeding to enable the Muhammadan members of the Board to make further representations to the Government. It seems to me that, if the Muhammadan members of the Board are still of the same mind as before and four Hindu members vote for staying the proceedings against three who support the Chairman, it is a matter in which Government can well regard the Chairman's views as of less moment than those of the Moslem members and a majority of the Hindu members. I hope and trust that no action of the Chairman will make this a Hindu-Moslem question, but if it has become one, I fear that some would be led to suspect that the Chairman actively assisted in creating such a dissension. I know how keen your Honour is that not a breath of suspicion should attach to the authorities with reference to the "divide and rule" policy. I only hope the Chairman of the Municipality at Cawnpore would be equally keen to avoid such suspicions.

I have counselled the Musalmans of Cawnpore to make yet another representation to your Honour if they cannot accept the representation as final, and I would once more beg you to accept my suggestion and consult some Moslem ulama and Moslem lawyers in the matter. I cannot, of course, refrain from commenting on this affair if the decision is given against what I believe to be a genuine complaint, but I would rather I do not have to comment on this matter at all, and that on a reconsideration your Honour found that you could respect our prejudices in the matter.

With kindest regards,

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) MOHAMED ALI

Source:
The Comrade, July, 1913

6

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO W.M. HAILEY CHIEF COMMISSIONER, DELHI.

(Unpublished)

To,

The Hon'ble Mr. W.M. Hailey,
Chief Commissioner,
Delhi

Kucha-i-Chelan,
Delhi, 18th July 1913

Sir,

I learn from "Gazette of India" extraordinary, recently issued, of which I have not received a copy, that the Governor-General-in Council has pleased to declare the pamphlet "Come over into Macedonia and help us" published by "Le Comite de Publication D.A.C.B." 15 Rue Djagal Oglane, Constantinople to be forfeited to his Majesty.

I received several copies from Turkey of this pamphlet long ago, and reprinted it in several issues of the *Comrade*, as a special supplement and have had it also translated and published in the *Hamdard* in various issues of June. I have also some extra copies of the supplement published in the *Comrade*.

I would beg you to inform me what you would desire me to do in the matter. Am I to send you or to any other authority in the Province the extra copies of the above mentioned supplement?

I would also beg you to inform me what should be done with the spare copies of the *Comrade* and the *Hamdard* in which the pamphlet or its translation have been published. Subscribers very often ask for back numbers, and intending subscribers ask for sample copies and I would practically like to know whether I am prohibited from sending them such issues of the *Comrade* and the *Hamdard*

as contain a reprint or translation of any portion of the Pamphlet forfeited to His Majesty.

Pending the receipt of a reply from you I have issued orders in my office stopping the supply of my issue of the *Comrade* and the *Hamdard* in which any portion of the reprint of the said Pamphlet or its translation has been printed.

I have the honour to be
Sir
Your most obedient servant

Dict: M.A.
Steno: S.L.

Editor and Proprietor
of the *Hamdard* and the *Comrade*
Delhi

Source:
Mohamed Ali Papers

7

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO W.M. HAILEY, CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF DELHI

(Unpublished)

To,

The Hon'ble Mr. W.M. Hailey,
C.I.E., I.C.S.
Chief Commissioner,
Delhi

Kucha-i-Chelan,
Delhi
21st July 1913

Sir,

With reference to the copy of your letter No. 5563 Home addressed to the Deputy Commissioner of Delhi on the 19th July of which a copy has been forwarded to me with your endorsement No. 5564 Home of the same date, in reply to my letter of the previous date, I have the honour to request you to be good enough to let me know if there is any authority for the forfeiture of reprints and translations of the forfeited pamphlet.

From the Government of India notification No. 384 of 16th July 1913 in pursuance of which the District Magistrate of Delhi has issued a warrant requiring me to surrender all reprints and translations, either the whole or in part in the newspapers, the *Comrade* and the *Hamdard*, it is clear that the order of forfeiture has been issued by the G.G. in Council only in respect of the Pamphlet entitled 'Come over into Macedonia and help us' published by "Le Comite de Publication D.A.C.B." 15 Rue Djagal Oglane, Constantinople. The reprints and the translations are not the pamphlet nor have they been published by the above mentioned Committee from Constantinople.

I had addressed a similar request to the Dist. Magistrate yesterday, but although I have received no reply to it myself from the Dist. Magistrate. Mr. Orde[1] informed me today that I am to surrender all copies of the newspapers containing any portión of the reprint or the translation.

However, as I have informed the Dist. Magistrate and also Mr. Orde, I am complying with the order of the Dist. Magistrate in the matter. But I still trust that you will kindly let me know whether there is any authority for over-ruling the objection raised about portions of the reprint and of the translations.

I also offered to Mr. Orde to ink such portions of the *Hamdard* as contained any portion of the translation published therein, but he has informed me that the Dist. Magistrate is not prepared even to concede this.

In section 7 of the Indian Press Act, only such books and newspapers are mentioned as are 'kept for sale, distribution, publication, or public exhibition'. If therefore, a few copies of the *Hamdard* were left with me for the purpose of my office, I would have gladly given an undertaking that they would not be sold, distributed or publicly exhibited.

I would beg you to consider the propositions mentioned above and let me know if you have any objection to concede either of them.

The copies of the reprint and various issues of the *Hamdard* in which the translation has appeared are being counted by the Police before being surrendered to them and I would, therefore, beg you to let me have a reply to those letter before 10 A.M. tomorrow after which I shall meet Mr. Orde with a view to comply with such orders on the subject as have finally been given.

In any case, I would beg you to note that the copies of the reprint and of portions of the newspapers, in which portions of the translation have appeared would be surrendered to the police under protest and without prejudice to my rights.

I have the honour to be
Sir,
Your most obedient servant
Editor of the *Comrade*
and the *Hamdard*

Source :
Mohamed Ali Papers

1. Mr. Orde was the acting superintendent of Police in Delhi.

8

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO MAJOR BEADON, DIST. MAGISTRATE, DELHI

(*Unpublished*)

Kucha-i-Chelan,
Delhi,
20th July 1913

Sir,

On the morning of the 19th inst. Mr. P. Orde, acting Superintendent of Police, came to visit me and showed me a warrant of yours dated 19th instant authorising and requiring him to call among others, on me and to require me to surrender to him all copies of the pamphlet entitled "Come over into Macedonia and help us", which had been forfeited to His Majesty by notification No. 384 dated 16th July 1913, published in Government of India Gazette (Home) by order of the Governor-General-in-Council together with such portions of the issues of the *Comrade* and the *Hamdard* as contain reprints or translations of the Pamphlet.

I have only this morning received my copy of the Gazette of India and on perusal of the notification which quote in your warrant at the authority for your action, I find that the order of forfeiture has been made by the G. G. in Council in exercise of the powers conferred by section 12 of the Indian Press Act 1910 (I of 1910). According to this Section a Police Officer may seize the Pamphlet entitled "Come over into Macedonia and help us" published by "Le Comite de Publication D. A. C.B." 15 Rue Djagal Oglane, Constantinople, but I do not find any authority in the Section for requiring me to surrender to the Police Officer whom a magistrate may by warrant authorise, such portions of the issue of my papers as contain reprints or translations of the Pamphlet in question. From the

wording of the Section, as well as of the notification No. 384, they appear to me to be applicable to the original pamphlet published in Constantinople only and not to such protions of the issues of newspapers as contain reprints or translations of the Pamphlet. These newspapers have not been declared to be forfeited, and I am not, therefore lawfully required to surrender them.

I would also refer you to Section 7 (1) of the Indian Press Act, when it is stated that where any book is declared forfeited to His Majesty under this Act, the Local Government may direct any magistrate to issue warrant empowering any police officer, not below the rank of a Sub-Inspector to enter any premises where any copy of such book "is kept for sale, distribution, publication, or public exhibition or reasonably suspected to be so kept", and to seize and detain it. From this it is clear that if the copies of the book declared to be forfeited to His Majesty are not kept for sale, distribution, publication or public exhibition or reasonably suspected to be so kept a warrant cannot be issued empowering the police to enter upon and search for such book in any premises or seize and detain such books.

I would, therefore, request you to be good enough to let me know under what authority I am required to surrender copies of my newspapers which have not been declared to be forfeited to His Majesty, and to surrender copies of the forfeited Pamphlet which are not kept for sale, distribution, publication or public exhibition. I write this to make sure that I am legally bound to obey the orders in question issued by you and not with any desire to avoid compliance with lawful order. I think this would be clear to you from the fact that even before I received a copy of the Gazette of India in which the notification No. ?84 was published or your order, I wrote to the Hon'ble the Chief Commissioner requesting him to let me know what he desired me to do in the matter of these pamphlets and their reprints and translation, and from the fact that when Mr. Orde came to me with your warrant I unhesitatingly offered to comply immediately and we have found it mutually convenient that all publications which I am lawfully required to surrender should be surrendered to Mr. Orde tomorrow morning.

I need not, of course, state that as I wrote to the Hon'ble Mr. Hailey, I stopped the publication of all issues of my papers containing

reprints or translations of the forfeited Pamphlet pending the settlement of the questions.

I have the honour to be
Sir
Your most obedient servant
Editor of the Comrade and the Hamdard

Source:
Mohamed Ali Papers

9

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO THE EDITOR OF THE "EMPIRE"

Calcutta
6th August 1913

Sir,

As an admirer of the independent and liberal-minded *Empire* I regret to note that in your comments on the "Cawnpore Riots" you have fallen into more than one error. At times such as this it is easy enough to fall into an error of judgment when on the one side we see the custodians of law and order and on the other an excited mob even if it is at first guilty of nothing more than a "public nuisance" in piling lose bricks without mortar upon one another on a site upon which but a month ago stood part of a mosque but which is now part and parcel of a new "Sanitary Road." But for a newspaper charged with the duty of stating the facts correctly to fall into errors of fact is to be guilty of still further clouding a situation which already a good deal befogged.

You are right in saying that "the Provincial Government's manifesto has only added fuel to the flames." The flames were already there in Cawnpore and had been growing in intensity for some months; but the almost inevitable conflagration was prevented by the so-called "outside agitators," of whom presumably I am one, who had counselled moderation, the use of none but constitutional means and preferably the suppression of newspaper agitation. Were it not for this, the flame would have lit up the big fire a month ago when a portion of the mosque was demolished. The Provincial Government's manifesto has indeed "added fuel to the flames" inasmuch as it accused the Mussalmans of Cawnpore of religious apathy by stating that there was no excitement in Cawnpore itself. It is reckless statement such as this that lead to bloodshed, because the more ardent spirits consider that excitement can be proved only by breaking the law. To say that the riots are due to the taunts of outside agitators

or the attacks of newspapers is to explain away one falsehood by means of another. You are, therefore, fully justified in seeking an explanation of the mob's action at Cawnpore on Sunday in the press *communique* issued by the U.P. Government about a week previously.

But to say that the Chairman of Municipality had no interest in retelling the story of Cawnpore Musalmans crowding into the mosque with their shoes on in company with him is to ignore the obvious; and to state that "although the Cawnpore Mussalmans have continued the agitation, they have not denied this point," is to say that which is entirely at variance with the facts. Was it not the Chairman who had set his heart on demolishing a portion of this mosque and had opposed the resolution for saving it which was adopted by the Municipal Board with the help of all the Indian votes both Hindu and Muhammadan? Was it not the Chairman who requested Government that this recommendation of Board should not be accepted? Was it not the Chairman whose casting vote decided that after the Government's rejection of the Board's recommendation at his own suggestion of the Memorial sent through the Hon. Shaikh Shahid Husain, no further representation be made to Government to save the mosque? Was it not the Chairman who, after Sir James Meston's assurance, as published in the Cawnpore *Herald* and never contradicted ere this, that neither the temple nor the mosque would be touched interpreted the touching of the mosque as the demolition of the western portion of mosque only? Was it not the Chairman who hurried things so manifestly as to give to the Trustees only twenty-four hours' notice about the acceptance of the compensation when I believe at least a fortnight's notice is usual? And was it not the Chairman who had the Eastern *dalan* demolished on the lst July even before Sir James Meston had replied to my letter of the 9th June and to the Memorial forwarded to him by the Hon. the Raja Saheb of Mahmudabad?[1] If human beings, including bureaucrats, are

1. Sir Ali Muhammad Khan, Muhammad, Maharaja of Mahmudabad (1879-1931) was the son of Sir Muhammad Amir Hasan Khan of Mahmudabad. He belonged to a rich landed aristocratic family and lived in a princely style. He was appointed a Member of the U.P. Legislative Council in 1904 and was elected to Indian Legislative Council in 1909. He earned knighthood and

Cont'd p. 32

occasionally obstinate and headstrong, why should we believe Mr. Sim, the Chairman, to have nothing but reasonable and accommodating?

Sir James Meston unreservedly accepts the truth of his statement; but why the Empire or the world? So much for possibilities and probabilities. Now a word about certainties. You say that "the Cawnpore Mussalmans.... have not denied the point," namely, "the the entrance of the Moslems who accompanied the Chairman of the Municipality wearing their shoes." I say they have denied the point and that more than once. I am grateful to Sir James Meston - and so are all of us - for permitting me to publish the correspondence that I carried on for a month and a half with His Honour instead of agitating in the Press. Besides showing that the eastern *dalan* where hands and face and feet, etc. were washed preparatory to prayers, or where overflow congregations offered prayers had been misrepresented to Sir James to be a mere "bathing enclosure," that correspondence shows that the sole evidence of the want of sanctity of the eastern *dalan* is the *ipse dixit* of Mr. Sim. Now for months past the Mussalmans of Cawnpore had been complaining of Mr. Tyler's having walked into the mosque with his boots on without asking anyone, and then turning round to the horrified - and we must add, terrified, even if it be the taunt of an outside agitator - spectators with the remark that as they did not prevent his entering it with boots on, the place could not have been a sacred portion of the mosque! Mr. Tyler is the District Magistrate of Cawnpore and the officer who ordered the police to fire on the mob last Sunday and for purposes of the Census at least is a totally different individual from Mr. Sim, the Chairman. Nobody in Cawnpore knew that Mr. Sim had ever walked into the mosque with his boots on, and when through the *Comrade* of the 5th July the Cawnpore Mussalmans learnt for the first time of his statement, they asked all present in a crowded meeting to state if they had entered the mosque with shoes on in his

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from p. 31

the titles of K.C.S.I. and K.C.I.E. He was appointed the Home Member in the Executive Council of the U.P. Governor in 1921, started his own paper "The Indian Daily Telegraph" and also gave liberal help to the "Comrade." He supported the All Indian Muslim League and the Indian National Congress. He twice presided the annual session of the League, 1917 and 1928.

company or seen him to it. Everyone denied it, and this denial has been published by the Trustees of the Mosque. They wanted to serve a notice on him to state who among the Mussalmans had committed this sacrilege and when he had done it himself or else withdraw. But in view of Sir James Meston's desire to prevent further excitement and his promise of receiving a deputation led by the Hon. the Raja Saheb of Mahmudabad, the Cawnpore Mussalmans were advised not to serve a lawyer's notice on the Chairman but merely ask him in a private letter. I am informed-and I believe this has been published in the newspapers-that Mr. Sim has very discreetly replied that he cannot make any statement on the subject at present. If the Conference next Saturday is not successful. . I have no doubt that Mr. Sim would be served with a lawyer's notice to with-draw or take the consequences. I trust this explanation will convince you that the Mussalmans of Cawnpore denied the story of Mr. Sim which is the sole evidence in possession of Government that the demolished was not sacred.

Although not relevant in this connection I must say you have fallen into another error of fact about the Moslem University Fund. I was the first I believe to propose a loan-not a gift as you say-of the University Fund to Turkey for war purposes and my warmest, but somewhat belated supporter was no other than His Highness the Aga Khan to whom you attribute a "steadying influence." As a matter of fact I have in my possession two letters in which I am authorised to require the authorities in charge of the University Fund to lend His Highness's own munificent contribution to the University Fund to the Ottoman Government.

Let me assure you, Sir, that matters of this character have a seriousness of their own which unfortunately Englishmen even in India have not fully realised, and it is the duty of all independent and liberal-minded journalists such as you to publish no statement unless they are sure of their facts. The Cawnpore Mosque question will either be finally settled, as I hope and trust, by the sagacious statesmanship of Sir James Meston, undoubtedly the ablest Civilian in India, or it would remain an open sore for years and years. I would therefore suggest a careful perusal of all the literature published on the subject and would commend the files of the *Comrade* to you.

One in your position can save Government from an error which ma have even greater consequences than the Partition of Bengal conceiv in chagrin, carried out in revenge, and continued for some time a least in obstinacy.

MOHAMED AL

Source:
The Comrade, August, 1913

10

LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI TO THE EDITOR OF THE COMRADE

My attention has been drawn to a paragraph which several Anglo-Indian papers had copied from the *Moslem Times* of Bombay about myself and my brother Mohamed Ali. It appeared in the *Morning Post* of the 16th September, a copy of which was shown to me. As far as I know there is no paper of the name of *Moslem Times* in Bombay. There is, however, a paper called the *Moslem Herald* published in Urdu, which has been giving incorrect reports about me and the Khuddam-i-Ka'aba Society, of which I have the honour of being one of the secretaries. I was surprised that the local Anglo-Indian daily should have published a statement like that without verifying it. The head office of the Khuddam-i-Ka'aba[1] is in Delhi itself, located in the old house of the late Sir Syed Ahmad Khan[2] at Tiraha Bairam Khan. Any reporter should have learnt the real facts. The Khuddam-i-Ka'aba is a purely religious society, concerning itself with nothing in the world except the Holy Ka'aba and Medina Sharif and other sacred places of Islam. It is an integral part of every Moslem's faith to safeguard the sanctity of the Holy Ka'aba and go at least once in his life-time for the pilgrimage. I believe the proprietor of this same *Moslem Herald* is also the gentleman who sends out in the name of

1. This association was founded by the Ali Brothers on March 31, 1913 for safeguarding the holy places from Christian aggression. Maulana Abdul Bari of Firangi Mahel, Lucknow, Musheer Husain Kidwai and Dr M.A. Ansari were its active members.
2. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898) was an educationist and a social reformer. He started the Aligarh Movement after the fall of the Mughals to propagate western education among the Muslims. This led to the foundation of the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh which developed into the Aligarh Muslim University in 1920.

the bogus "Loyal Moslem Association of Bombay" those telegrai to the Anglo-Indian Press, trying to prove that he and his "Assoc tion" were alone loyal and the rest of the Moslem India, because held different views, was "disloyal". One feels sorry that su writings should be given so much prominence. As for the Khuddar -Ka'aba Society, it aims at nothing new. Thirteen hundred years a our great faith made it obligatory on every Mussalman to guard i sanctity of the Ka'aba. Our Society is not anti-Christian, nor ar Hindu nor against any other religion. We have no time to waste abusing other peoples' faiths. We desire to strengthen our own. regards our work, the *Moslem Herald* will hear a great deal about and I am afraid it will then give equally and enormously exaggera figures of the membership. We have just commenced our work. E in this short time we have over 5,000 members scattered all over country, but God willing we will count them in lakhs soon. I happy to say that not only my sister but all the ladies of my fam and several hundred other Muhammadan ladies from different p of India have joined, and we expect every Mussalman man woman to be on our list. We know full well that there had alw been, and would always be some people who will barter away best part of their faith for even a slight gain. Their business is create mischief, so that they may pose before men in authority those who were on the side of law and order and profit by it. Th live and grow fat on the misery of others. We know our Society w have to face many calumnies and misunderstandings, but we have feat for the future. I will be glad, Sir, if you would kindly publ this. Our office in Delhi is open from فجر up to عشا prayers, and would be glad to give anybody any information he may need ab our work. One word more. I had gone to Bombay early in Septem to see my brother off and had no intention of either going to Eur or of delivering lectures in Bombay.

Source:

The Comrade, October, 1913

11

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

29th November 1913

Sir,

You published in your issue of the 3rd November a lengthy article on "The Moslem League of India" contributed by a correspondent to which I feel a reply is required not only to do justice to ourselves but also to The All-India Moslem League and in fact to the large bulk of the Moslem community.

Your correspondent states that His Highness the Aga Khan and Mr. Ameer Ali "have tendered their resignations as the result of the demands for official recognition in London of two representatives of the extreme or 'Nationalist' section of the League in India."

This statement is wholly untrue as would appear from the following passages in the letter, addressed by Mr. Wazir Hasan[1] to

1. Syed Wazir Hasan (1874-1947) graduated from Aligarh and Muir Central College, Allahabad and began his practice in Jaunpur and then shifted to Lucknow. He was very active in Muslim politics since the start of his career and was the founder member of the All India Muslim League. He was assistant secretary to the League in 1910-12 and its secretary in 1912-19. On the Kanpur Mosque question when the government demolished a portion of the Kanpur mosque he accompanied Mohamed Ali to London to present the case of the Kanpur mosque to the Home Government. He was one of the judges of the Chief Court of Oudh. He presided the annual session of the All-India Muslim League held at Bombay in 1936. But he left League after sometimes and became a member of the Congress.

Mr. Ameer Ali,[2] on the 29th October, which your correspondent has entirely ignored.

What His Highness the Aga Khan has said about the development and progress of the Moslem League, makes it unnecessary for me to repudiate the aspersions cast on that body or on those who hold positions of authority therein. But I should like to quote for the benefit of your readers remarks addressed by Mr. Wazir Hasan and myself at two public meetings since our coming to England. Mr. Wazir Hasan referring to what he called "Chimerical dangers pointed out the needless warnings indulged in by a certain section of the Anglo-Indian Press, which have found an echo in the correspondence columns of an important journal here", said that, "the unity of Hindus and Mussalmans is not to be a unity in opposition to the British Government... Is it sane to imagine for a moment that Indian Mussalmans mean to exterminate the British and oust the British Government from India simply because, following slowly in the wake of the Government of India, they have now come to cherish the ideal of self-government, to which such a clear reference was made in the now memorable despatch of that Government on the 25th August 1911?... Is it wise, is it even in the interests of the continuance of the British connection with India, to distort for the ultimate rulers of India (the British public) the legitimate hopes and aspirations of educated Mussalmans into a movement of anarchical character?"

Addressing another audience I said :—

"Far from being disloyal to the British Government we regard it as a dispensation of Providence because it provides for 70,000,000 of us the peace that the Turks and the Persians and the Morocans lack, and introduces a factor in our education which is not shared with us by our co-religionists abroad. We have a chance of combining the best in the East with the best in the West, and while abating not a

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2. Rt. Hon. Syed Ameer Ali (1849-1928) took his M.A. and B.L. from Calcutta and was called to the Bar at Inner Temple in 1873. He practised in the Calcutta High Court. He became a member of the Bengal Legislative Council (1878-83) and the Governor-General's Legislative Council (1878-83). He founded the Central National Muhammadan Association and was its secretary from 1878-90. He took active part in Muslim politics and made efforts to ameliorate their conditions.

jot of our Islamic and extra-territorial fervour we are determined to take advantage of all the facilities which British Rule in India provides for our self-improvement".

If you would like to satisfy yourself that these are not our views manufactured for British consumption alone. I would quote the concluding paragraph of a leading article which appeared in an issue of my paper, dated 4th January last, dealing with the recently evolved creed of the Moslem League. It runs thus :—

"We also offer him (Mr. Wazir Hasan) here as Mr. Mohamed Ali did in the course of discussion at Lucknow, our cordial support in maintaining that loyalty should be placed on the forefront of the objects of every political organisation in the country... A few calculating men have no doubt harped on loyalty too often just as they have made much personal capital out of the protection of communal interests. But that is no more reason for giving up the profession of loyalty than for discarding the declaration that the League shall advance and protect communal interests. The loyalty of the Mussalmans is a well established fact and we shall not pause to make invidious comparisons, for we have no desire that other communities should lag behind them in this respect. We trust that in course of time the loyalty of the whole of India would become so real and well-grounded that a declaration of loyalty in the political creed of any association will merely pass for a polite convention not unlike the oath of allegiance which the Members of Parliament in England and our own Councillors in India are required to take. So long as the political relationship of England to India is unique among the nations it is necessary to keep the loyalty of India to the British Crown in the forefront of India's political creed, but even when this unique character ceases to exist we trust the dignity of the Indian nation would not be so delicate as to be unable to bear the weight of the convention of loyalty. And dignity should not be proclaimed from the housetops any more than loyalty. To-day it is necessary to work for the creation of a nation by promoting unity between the various communities of the country and fostering a public spirit... and it is our firm belief that whatever may be the policy of this or that ruler of India it is the connection of India with Great Britain which has made it possible for an Indian nation to come into being. A nation would be the greatest blessing that England would confer on India, and those who work for it and hasten its advent, whether Indian or English, are deserving of our eternal gratitude."

As regards your correspondent's classification of Indian Mohamedans the less said the better. Anyone who knows India would at once tell you that it is absurd to the diverge of puerility. Mr. Wazir Hasan has as noble a pedigree as the Aga Khan or Mr. Ameer Ali for he is also a Syed, that is, a direct descendant of the Prophet of Islam. I may be forgiven the egotism if I say for myself that I trace my pedigree to the first man in Arabia outside the Prophet's family who embraced Islam. I refer to the first Caliph. Both of us have only too numerous relations serving Government, and although not a Pathan myself, my family bears the honorific title of Khan as an indication of having for several generations identified itself with the Rohillas over whom His Highness the Nawab of Rampur, of whom I am a devoted subject, rules. In that State my family has a very large number of officers in the army. But if it pleases your correspondent to call us "Moslem Babus" and "of the same blood as the worshippers at Benares and Puri" we have no objection. It is the glory of Islam that it is the greatest solvent of races and colours and if in spite of being recent converts we are acknowledged by our co-religionists to be their representatives that only proves the merit of Islam. The India Office as well as the Government of India that have received numerous telegrams accrediting us as the agents of Indian Mussalmans know only too what we are well in spite of your correspondent's calling us "two representatives of the extreme or 'Nationalist' section of the League in India" and among "a few unrepresentative members of the League."

Yours faithfully,
MOHAMED ALI

Source:
The Comrade, November, 1913

12

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO LORD MORLEY[1]

Shortly after my arrival in England in the last week of September, I had the honour of writing to Your Lordship requesting an interview in connection with certain matters agitating the minds of the Moslem community in India and enclosing a letter of introduction very kindly given to me for Your Lordship by the Honourable Sir Lawrence Jenkins, Chief Justice of Bengal. In reply to that I was informed that Your Lordship was generally very busy and could not accede to my request.

May I hope that Your Lordship will now be able to accord an interview to my friend. Mr. Syed Wazir Hasan, Honorary Secretary of the All-India Moslem League, and myself?

I wonder whether Your Lordship's attention has been called to the campaign of villification, not only against ourselves, but also against a very large bulk of the Moslem community in India. We have tried repeatedly but without success, or at the best with partial success, to get rejoinders from us published in these newspapers and this makes it all the more necessary that we should approach some minister in England of sufficiently large sympathies, and with an open mind to whom we could explain the views which we share with our co-religionists and our fellow-countrymen on some very important questions rightly affecting the interest of the Mussalmans and of all India, and in fact the interest of the Empire. We are not unaware of the fact that Your Lordship is not directly connected with the governance of India and that at your time of life it would be want of consideration on our part if we troubled you needlessly. Had we been able to avoid this and to approach any other minister, we should

1. John Morley, (1838-1923) was the Secretary of State for India 1905-1910. He is known as an author as well.

certainly have done so. But we regret to find that even in the bı
ministry to-day, so little is known about India, and in fact thro
the Empire, there are not a dozen men whose knowledge of Ind
be considered in any measure satisfactory, or whose knowledge
combined together, can equal Your Lordship. This compels us,
out any desire to flatter you, to trouble you once more wit
humble request for an interview at an early date.

We could have communicated our ideas through a secti
least of the liberal press which has very kindly invited us to d
but there are certain matters which it is better to deal direct wit
authorities than through the press or the public platform, and sł
Your Lordship be graciously pleased to grant us an interview,
only we, but millions of our fellow-countrymen and co-religic
would feel grateful.

An early reply is humbly solicited.

Source:
The Comrade, December 1913

13

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI AND SYED WAZIR HASAN TO LORD CREWE[1]

Your Lordship,

Although we greatly regret Your Lordship's final decision not to accord the interview which we had solicited, we trust Your Lordship would accord to the copy of a letter which we have received from H.H. the Aga Khan, the consideration that it deserves.

We have already indicated how we were being vilified by the *Times* and some other Tory papers, and how our rejoinders were either returned to us unpublished, or badly mutilated and curtailed. In that way considerable injustice was done to us socially by mis-statements regarding the object and the genesis of the proposals of H.H. the Aga Khan to give us a public dinner.

But much more serious was the reflection which these writings cause on the political attitude and temper, not only of ourselves but also of what His Highness the Aga Khan calls "the growing class" which we represent amongst the Mohammedans of India.

We hope H.H. the Aga Khan's letter will vindicate us not only socially, but politically as well, and that His Majesty's Government would not be influenced in any way against us and those whom we represent by what the Aga Khan calls "the absurd but none the less mischievous theory that has got abroad," that those whom we represent and we ourselves "have sympathy or something in common with the extremists of the Tilak school or with the mad political pan

1. Lord Crewe (1858-1945) entered the House of Lords in 1885. He was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland by Glandstone in 1892; Colonial Secretary 1908-10 and the Secretary of State for India 1910-15. He played a major part in the constitutional crisis of 1909-11 and remained in the Cabinet until 1916.

Islamists." Our loyalty to the Government is, as His Highness sai "undoubted" and the charges brought against our community gen rally are "false." This is what His Highness sincerely believes to the fact and he makes it clear in his letter that he had nothing to with the "disastrous complications" that arose on His Highness departure, and the publication of the *Times* articles on the 31 October.

For purposes of some official record in India Office of the "disastrous complications" we venture to send herewith a complet copy of the correspondence that took place between the Righ Hon'ble Mr. Ameer Ali and one of us.

We apologise for taking so much of Your Lordship's time an remain.

Your Lordship's humble and obedient servants
WAZIR HASAN

MOHAMED ALI

Belgrave Mansions,
Grosvenor Gardens, S.W.,

20th November, 1913

Source.

The Comrade, December, 1913

14

LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI TO THE EDITOR OF THE COMRADE

Date

I would be extremly obliged if you would kindly allow me to appeal to the Old Boys to take up Aligarh and other communal work seriously in hand. The Moslem University Association must be brought into existence as early as possible. The Trustees, the Mohomedan Educational Conference and the Old Boys have already elected their representatives. The Moslem graduates, the zamindars, the tax-payers and the Press have to fill in the vacancies allotted to them respectively. I am informed that owing to various causes, which have been distracting the attention of our people, very few names have been registered in the graduates' and the zamindar's guilds. According to the rules such Aligarh Old Boys as are graduates of five years standing and send in Rs. 15 at once to the Honorary Secretary of the Moslem University Association, would be eligible for election and have a vote. So far only 6 names have been registered for 20 vacancies. The zamindars also can get enrolled by the payment of Rs. 15 only. Ten names have been registered for 10 vacancies. We have no desire to pack the Moslem University Association with the Aligarh Boys, in fact we would be glad to give others a chance; but if they are not forthcoming, the Old Aligarh graduates and Old Boy zamindars should gladly come forward. We are not ashamed of the part the Old Aligarians have taken in communal affairs and I think the general Moslem public has often gratefully acknowledged our services. Our college and its students have won a warm corner for themselves in the hearts of the Mussalmans and never did our community love Aligarh more than it does at the present time. Now, we must devote our time to work for the development of our University. I appeal to all the Old Boys to take this work up in right earnest. They have to build up Aligarh and they must do it. They should

help us also (1) in increasing the membership of the Old Boys Association. (The College needs greater financial aid and we ought to share to it), (2) in clearing up arrears due from them, and (3) in the building of the upper storey of the Old Boys Lodge, so that in future, we may be free to place all our income at the disposal of the College. We Old Boys must wake up now.

Source:
The Comrade June, 1914.

15

LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI TO THE EDITOR OF THE COMRADE

Sir,—Since the publication of the report of Dr. Abdur Rahman, the Vice-Counsel at Jeddah, it has been discussed all over the country. When I was leaving Delhi for Bombay to arrange on behalf of our Society, "The Khuddam-i-Ka'aba," to give every possible help to the Hajis, not only our members, who naturally desire a very much larger number of Muslims both rich and poor to perform this great religious function, but many others had also requested me to make full inquiries about the statements made in the said report, as they were not verified by those who had themselves performed the Haj that year.

With an open mind and with the sole idea of finding out the real facts, I have visited officials, ship owners, pilgrims' brokers, broker's servants, "moalimis", old residents of Jeddah and Mecca and many Hajis who know the affairs of the Hejaz intimately. The information that I have been able to collect, I beg to offer to the public, without exaggeration or varnish, as, in my opinion, the Mussalmans want nothing else but the exact truth to tackle the whole problem and solve it once for all.

Most of the non-officials that I met spoke in strong words about the Vice-Consul and said some ugly things which, having no great bearing on the question, I leave out. They accused him of exaggerating facts so as to discourage the Indian Mussalmans from going to Haj, and of arousing a feeling of disgust against the Turkish authorities; also of insinuating and stating facts in such a way that the ordinary layman, who was not conversant with the real state of affairs, should be led to believe that it was the Turkish Government who were at fault, when actually they were not. Take, for example, the statement about the quarantine at Kamran. If the Turks had full authority in the matter, they would have done away with it long ago.

But at present they are powerless. It has been imposed by an International Sanitary Board at Constantinople, on which sit the representatives of all the Powers, and the decisions of this Board have to be carried out by the Turkish authorities. I have repeatedly heard from pilgrims of the brutal treatment meted out to them by the doctors and petty officials, who are mostly Greeks and non-Muslims. The Hajis did not understand why the Turkish authorities could not employ Muslims officials to carry out this delicate task. Of course they abused the Turks for this, but they did not know that the Turks had to carry out the orders of the International Sanitary Board, and had absolutely no voice in the matter. To an ordinary mind it would appear from the report of the Vice-Consul that poor pilgrims, besides being face to face with a dire disease like cholera, were being fleeced brutally at Kamran. And Kamran is situated in Turkish territory. The conclusion is so obvious. Take another example. The floods at Hamara, situated between Mecca and Medinah, did carry away pilgrims, but not so many as the Vice-Consul mentions. About 400 in all were drowned. Such a thing had not happened in that part of the country for generations. Surely plague, cholera, floods, etc. are visitations of God and cannot be controlled by any Government howsoever powerful and capable.

At the time of the Haj there are about 5 lakhs of people in Mecca, and those who have seen the religious fairs even in our own country, with its enormous resources and able officials, can realize how absolutely impossible it becomes to make proper sanitary arrangements. I was at Benares as a Government official for three years. I have visited Allahabad during the *Magh mela*. I have visited Hardwar and also Ajmer and Piran Kaleer during the *urs*, and I wish Dr. Abdur Rahman were with me to report on the sanitary conditions there. Barely five weeks ago the sanitary conditions round about the Durgah at Ajmer were such as would sicken nobody and the water looked more like thick "pea-soup." Nobody complained of this, because on occasions and gatherings like these and with the poor attending them in large numbers, no sanitary arrangements could hold. Because there were heavy floods at Hyderabad and Burdwan; cholera at the *Magh melas* of Allahabad and other Hindu and Muslim fairs at Benares, Hardwar, Ajmer, Pak Pattan, Piran Kaleer; disasters on the sea like those of the "Titantic" and the "Empress of Ireland;" railway collisions like the one near Ghaziabad,-all resulting in fearful loss of life, -therefore Hyderabad and Burdwan were to be boycotted; Allahabad,

Benares, Hardwar and Ajmer fairs given up, and no one was to travel either by sea or land. What does the following mean:—

"If Indian Moslems decide to come to Arabia, they must do so without any idea save that of resolute performance of religious duty in pursuance of which they must be ready to face certain hardships and not unlikely death."

I am afraid warnings like the above have no sense in them except that they give the fullest reflection of the innermost feelings of the water, Mussalmans complain that they are not children, ignorant of the conditions in Arabia. They fully realise the hardships of travelling and they also know fully well that journey in a desert and sparsely populated country like the Hejaz is no picnic. Many of the educated Mussalmans, with whom I discussed this problem, expressed a firm desire to go to the Haj next year, nor with the intention of issuing warnings to the people but to remove the difficulties there and make things easier. It is duty of every Mussalman from every part of the world to do all he can to improve the conditions in the Hejaz, and help the distracted Turkish authorities who have had enough troubles of their own to worry them. I expect next year a good many of the eminent Mussalmans will go for the Haj with the intention of seeing things for themselves and resolving on a scheme of improvements.

The Vice-Consul is right about the unprotected water-supply, which can get tainted very easily. Our Society intends to send out a Mussalman engineer to report on it. The *Ain Zubeida* gives sufficient water for all requirements, if the spare water-supply in the off season is stored up properly. A few storage reservoirs are needed. The water after being purified can be distributed by means of either pipes or *bhishties*.

As for the monopoly and the compulsory return tickets, the whole community practically unanimously has decided against it. If any one carefully looked into the history of the Shipping Industry of Bombay, he could find that 40 years ago a good deal of this business was being carried on by Mussalmans and the "Haj Question" did not exist. The question has become acute since the day when the Bombay Persian Steam Navigation Company, owned by Shirazis, the Amin-Uttujar family, was sold to Messrs. Turner, Morrison & Co. I would like to be perfectly fair to Messrs. Turner, Morrison & Co. They have come to this country for business and naturally would like to make as much profit out of it as possible. There is absolutely no question of

charity or piety, and nobody may reasonably expect anything of the sort from them. They were a powerful and influential firm before, and since the amalgamation of the P. & O. and the British India Steam Navigation Companies, with whom they are associated, their influence has gone up a great deal. They began to raise the fares and the other companies followed suit, with the result that there was a general outcry, and thus the "Haj Question" was brought into existence. For example, Rs. 40 was the fare advertised. The intending pilgrims, on hearing this,flocked to Bombay from all parts of India. When there were, say, 3000 pilgrims, and the available accommodation for 1,500 only, there was a rush for tickets, and the fares were quitely raised from Rs. 40 to Rs. 90, Rs. 100 and even Rs. 110. This upset all the calculations of the poor Haji. Having once started and come so far, he would not think of going back and practically spent all his money in Bombay. This gamble was always there, but not to any inconvenient extent. Leaving aside the last few years, when Messrs. Turner, Morrison & Co., came into the field, the average fare for the previous ten years was Rs. 28-8-0 from Bombay to Jeddah, and Rs. 22-8-0 from Jeddah to Bombay, that is, Rs. 51-0-0 only for both going and coming back. Last year the poor unfortunate pilgrims had to pay from Rs. 100 to Rs. 110 for going only. The Government of Bombay got alarmed at this, and was anxious to stop this. Messrs. Turner, Morrison & Co., gallantly came forward and offered a very simple solution. They asked for the grant of sole monopoly for carrying pilgrims, recommending the introduction of compulsory return tickets, and fixed the fares at Rs. 160 for both the voyages. The Bombay Government recommended this arrangement, as apparently they must have been anxious to wash their hands of this affair; but the Mussalmans naturally would not accept such a simple remedy "worse than the disease"-I was told that last year the Manager of Messrs. Turner, Morrison & Co. went to Jeddah himself and ordered that the fares for the return voyage should not be lowered. The poor pilgrims would have suffered a great deal, and Dr. Abdur Rahman would again have written strongly in favour of the monopoly and the compulsory return tickets, if it were not for Mr. Abdullah Mian Khandwani, who would not join the combine, and with his one boat the "Lawoe", brought down the rates. He brought pilgrims back for Rs. 30 or even lower and over 700 pilgrims for absolutely nothing, in fact feeding many of them on the way. He deserves the thanks both of the Mussalmans and the Government. The Arab Company brought 400 destitute Hajis, and Messrs. Turner, Morrison & Co. also

brought 200 for whom they demanded money from the Government but were refused.

I would here like to note the effect which the grant of monopolies has produced elsewhere. The cost of the three days' voyage from Suez to Jeddah and back was under Rs. 20. The present Khedive in a weak moment was prevailed upon to sell his company to a syndicate which was also given a monopoly for the pilgrims traffic. The cost for the same journey now is Rs. 78. A similar monopoly was given for pilgrims from Singapure and the Malay States. The fare from Singapure to Jeddah used to be about Rs. 67 and for a return ticket from Rs. 100 to Rs. 120. Now they charge for the same journey Rs. 267, with the result that pilgrims from Java and the Malay States travel by the Japanese boats-which are successfully competing with the B.I.S.N. Company-to Calcutta, from there by rail to Bombay where they take boat for Jeddah. They find this much cheaper.

Practically every Mussalman opposed the grant of the monopoly, but some who did not know the facts saw no objection in the compulsory return tickets. Now monopoly means nothing but monopoly, while the system of compulsory return tickets means compulsory return tickets *plus* the grant of a monopoly, for the Arab Company, Abdullah Mian Khandwani and other smaller Companies, who help in keeping the rates down, would disappear as not being able to guarantee the return of pilgrims who will come back to Jeddah in dribblets. Messrs. Turner, Morrison & Co. would alone be left in the field. I am afraid the new proposals of the Government. are no improvement on the old. They mean practically the same thing, that is, the giving of the monopoly and the introduction of compulsory return tickets, but in an indirect way.

The question of destitute Hajis was always there, but it never caused any great trouble to anybody. The Muslim shipping companies, doing this business, always, towards the end, brought in free a shipload or two of these as a pure act of charity. From Bombay they disappeared to their homes. Last year too they did the same. The Government only in 1912-1913 paid Rs. 20,000 for poor and destitute Hajis, out of which Rs. 3,000 were contributed by the Bombay Haj Committee. As far as my information goes, Government had never before incurred any expenditure on this account.

The only possible solution under the circumstances appears to be that the Government should make an appeal to the Mussalmans of

India, princes, noblemen, zemindars, merchants and the poor alike to start a shipping concern of their own in the interests mainly of the pilgrims. The promoters would get a modest return on their investments and at the same time they will {be doing a great act of charity.

"Hotel Majestic,"
BOMBAY

SHAUKAT ALI
Secretary,
Khuddam-i-Ka 'aba Society

Source:
The Comrade, July, 1914

16

LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI TO CHIEF COMMISSIONER

(Unpublished)

Sandal Khana
24th May 1915

Dear Sir,

Mr. Mohamed Ali has...(illegible)...letter No. 3352 Home dated the 20th May 1915, I have seen his reply to you and only add here but as the state has sent me here in the interest of its administration it is just and fair that it should carefully come forward and pay for administrature act also. I have always worked hard and honestly to earn my living and if the state pleases for its own reason to deprive me of the earning power it should come forward to recompensate one who has unfortunately a large family and a large heart. I do hope you will consider your decision and revise it in our favour.

Yours truly,
(Sd.) SHAUKAT ALI

Source:
Shaukat Ali Papers

17

LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI TO RAJA MUHAMMAD MIR MUHAMMAD, ESQ: KARACHI

(Unpublished)

Sandalkhana, Mahrouli,
Delhi
June 9, 1915

To,

Raja Muhammad Mir Muhammad, Esq;
Karachi

My dear Brother,

The office, alongwith other letters which come to me every day, sent your noble and plucky letters and the cutting from the Sind Gazette. Keep on writing and working. It is at these times that men by persistent and earnest work and great patience do build up great causes. We have a very noble and great work before us. Nobody, however, he may try, can find fault with it. Further, it can never be killed whatsoever people may say or do. So my dear brother and fellow worker I request you to tell all our brethern and co-workers to gird up their loins and take up my burdens. You deserve help and co-operation. I know months ago that all those who were sane and loved Islam above all things must be ready to bear many little hardships due entirely to the misconception of the official mind. They are expecting too much from the poor Mussalman who does not desire to create any trouble in India but who at the same time entirely disapproves of the foolish and wrong policy of the English as regards his Majesty the Sultan and Khalif. As Khuddam-i-Haramain Sharifain all Mussalmans must bow to him and pray for him. All this tangle and nasty position which English finds itself is due to the wrong foreign policy adopted in the case of Moslem

States. The catastrophe has happened and I am afraid still worse may happen. May God help Islam!

As for myself, dear brother, I am delighted that I am suffering a little for the sake of my great Faith. I am prepared for very much worse fare. May God see that I remain true. My brother sends his love to you. His health is ever so much stronger now. He has a great regard for your inadmittable courage in carrying on the work single-handed in a backward and difficult Province. We are pioneers and so must bear the brunt.

I am a Muhammadan and under the protection of God, I always pray to God to grant me soft feeling as that I may serve Him even though I be in a low condition.

Our Khuddam-i-Ka'abe has written a fine circular letter to all the members. You will get it soon. I will send one also. I appeal to all our brethern each in his own way to do his utmost for this noble mission. Please give my love to all. Give my Salams to Mr. Burgri[1] and Abdul Aziz.[2]

Yours sincerely,
SHAUKAT ALI

Source:
Mohamed Ali Papers

Note:—The words in Italics are a translation of the Arabic in the original letter.

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1. G.M. Burgri (1878-1924) was educated at Aligarh; proceeded to England and returned as a barrister. He was elected to the Bombay Council in 1910 and started taking active part in politics. He attended the Congress as well as the League annual sessions and helped the Congress-League Pact of 1916. He presided the Bombay session of the All-India Khilafat Congress. In 1923 he presided over the Lucknow session of the All-India Muslim League.
2. Abdul Aziz, took his M.A. in 1901 and served the Government of the Punjab in many capacities. He was a nationalist and wanted the national movement to be taken on constitutional lines,

18

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO M[r] RAMSAY MacDONALD[1], M.P.

(Unpublished)

Chhindwara
18th February

Dear Mr. Ramsay Macdonald,

I had not written to any friends in England since my i ment, except once to Mr. H.E.A. Cotton on the passing aw our kind friend Sir Henry, so that when an envelope with the familiar postmark of London was brought to me here yesterc spent quite a long time in guessing who my English correspc could be in the interval between sending my post as usual t Censor and getting it back from him after his scrutiny. Whe post reached me again I was glad to get your change of addre although it conveyed nothing beyond the news of your char address, it gave me the welcome assurance that kind friend yourself in England did not regard me as entirely out of the la the living.

The reason why I had not written all this time to frie England was a little hesitancy and shyness lest they should r my corresponding with them as a gentle reminder of my int existence and appeal for help. In my very short public ' have interested myself in many things and people and appealed on their behalf from demolished mosques to stra nations and coerced countries. But in the first serious consec of altruism coming home to me personally, I was somewhat an to bear its full force myself, without seeking outside succour.

1. Ramsay MacDonald (1866-1937) was the first Labour Minister of England. He was one of the founders of the Labour Party.

may not be politics; but as you know, perhaps, there is a so-called "fanatical" side to every Mussalman and I am glad to note that it rises superior to all merely "Political" considerations in all real crises, even in so weak a Moslem as myself.

However, now that you have been good enough to remember me without my intruding on your notice, I see no harm in letting you know something about myself. Besides, I have been a student of Labour questions in England and a constant reader of the *Labour Leader* which Mr. Brockway has been good enough to continue to send me although *The Comrade* like myself, is in a state of suspended animation and makes no public appearance since November, 1914, when a rejoinder to the *Times* article on "*The Choice of the Turks*" which was commented upon most favourably by English journals of such diverse character and political as the *Morning Post*, the *New Statesman*, the *Daily Telegraph* and *India*, brought upon its devoted head the wrath of the Government of India and the judgement of a military magistrate. Well, I have not failed to note the attitude of the Independent Labour Party including yourself and of some Liberals like Ponsonby, Trevellian and Morel and the steadfast loyalty to their principles and beliefs which this minority has shown under the most trying circumstances. As suffering is, at least for the moment, common as a badge to us, I can perhaps include myself in your tribe and unfold my table without wearying you. In course of it, I, too, shall notify my changes of address though I fear I have more than one in store for me before I reach the final destination of which Truth points the way with an inexorable and steady finger to all her votaries. I only pray I may not falter, and wish to rest too long by the roadside.

Diabetes which had first come my way in Calcutta, in 1911, and after a stay of some 6 weeks during the summer, had revisited me for some 10 weeks in 1912, and returned while I was still on board the ship on my back to India in December 1913. Had I listened to the advice of the doctors I would have taken a rest cure, but there's no peace for the wicked and no rest for the "discontented". When the war broke out I had to take to bed for some eight weeks, not because I wished to rest, and actually rested, but because a scratched toe necessitated two operations—themselves of a very minor character but resulting in a diabetic wound which takes ages to heal. I had hardly recovered from this when my wife had a

sudden heart attack and internal complications and was at death's door during a painful crisis lasting three days, just when the *Comrade* had its troubles. Thank God she was saved, but it took her three or four months to recover, even though partially. In the meantime I had a sudden shock in the death from cholera of my brother Shaukat's wife who had so cheerfully nursed my own. All this told on my own health enormously, for as you know, the other name for Diabetes is "Worry". But even then I could not afford to take rest. The *Comrade* case had to be argued in two High Courts, Calcutta and Lahore. I regret to have to say that Sir Lawrence Jenkins who was somewhat anxious not to have the case brought up in Calcutta threw it out without entering into its merits. His short judgement is far from satisfactory for he did not even lay it down that the Calcutta High Court had no jurisdiction because the order under the Press Act of one local Government-Delhi-was inoperative in another-Bengal. The Police Commissioner of Calcutta would not confiscate the copy of the prescribed issue of *The Comrade* tendered by us, and the Government of Bengal never answered Mr. Bhopendra Nath Basu's half a dozen letters as my "honorary" solicitor asking them if that meant that we could sell the prescribed issue in Bengal. They merely acknowledged every reminder! At Lahore, I know the result. Nasty things were said about me by the present Chief Judge Sir D.C. Johnstone, I.C.S., and the then Chief Judge Sir Alfred Kensington, I.C.S., reminded me of the Judges of a famous court in English history under the Tudors. But once or twice I had an opportunity to administer a rebuke to him, and as it was widely reported in the Press, I think he got less satisfaction out of it than I. What I could do then was to go to the Privy Council with hope that Lord Haldane would pronounce a judgement worth of British justice on the Press Act and its administration, if not on my own case of a character to satisfy me.

But in the meantime my health failed completely, and I decided to rest after all. The cool climate of a hill station was the best and my doctors insisted on it. But in the interval, the Defence of India Act had been passed, and you will realize how accurately we who had tried to fight against such despotism had gauged the character of the measure and those in whose hands the new weapon was placed, that all my friends dissuaded me from taking the rest cure in the jurisdiction of Sir James Meston or where Sir Reginald

Craddock[1] had distinct influence. We fixed upon my home at Rampur at last, where the Defence Act would not apply. My house at Delhi was practically shut up and a huge caravan, with a portion of my household goods, left Delhi for Rampur.

As exercise had been prescribed for me I took advantage of a shooting party to go with my brother-in-law, an Oxford man who has only just resigned the Principalship of the Law College at Dacca to go back to his old love-the Bar at Patna, and we had four days' buck-shooting in the estate of a relative in Rampur territory. From this trip I returned the same day, with fever and my inside altogether upset as Mr. Doughlas Straight (Inspector-General to the U.P. Police) son of Sir Douglas Straight, once a High Court Judge at Allahabad, arrived as the guest of His Honour the Nawab of Rampur. Next morning His Highness saw the Inspector-General and immediately afterwards sent for my cousin, the Captain of his Palace Guards, and asked him where I was, whether I had returned, and also complained of something that had appeared in my Urdu daily -the *Hamdard*- from the pen of a local correspondent about the demolished Cawnpore mosque, while I was away from Delhi on my shooting trip. An hour after that I was sent for and INTERNED. I was to be confined in the Palace grounds, and live in a room in the Indian Guest House at His Highness expense. I was to have no access to writing materials, and my internment was to last as long as the war. My offence was that British officials had always complained to him that the Arcadia of British India had become a veritable Gehenna with a large-sized pandemonium all because two sturdy Rampur vagabonds my brother and myself. The Cawnpore controversy and my somewhat successful trip to England were the particular counts of the charge.

Well, before I took up quarters in the City Palace, I was perverse enough to get high fever while still with His Highness who had now Mr. Doughlas Straight also as a visitor come to see him in the Palace outside the city where the Nawab was staying owing to plague. I was sent for to meet Mr. Straight and a somewhat frank discussion

1. Reginald Craddock (1864-1937) I.C.S., was Chief Commissioner of Central Provinces, 1907-12; knighted in 1911; Home Member of the Viceroy's Council 1912-17; Lt. Governor of Burma, 1917-22 and authored *The Dilemma in India*.

on the subject of the Cawnpore mosque. Sir James Meston's screening the Collector, and the doctrine of the Civil Service Prestige, took place. Both the Inspector-General and the internal vagabond returned late in the night to the City Palace. I cannot say how he passed the night, but I could have no rest owing to fever. Next morning Mr. Straight went back. My fever increased in the day and by sunset His Highness was persuaded to intern me at my own house and confer on me at least the freedom of the City of Rampur. Unfortunately fever did not altogether leave me, and in the meantime one of my daughters also fell seriously ill. In the meantime my brother, Shaukat, come several times from Delhi where he was managing my affairs to see the Nawab and at last persuaded him to let me go to Mussoorie in the company of my doctor who had taken rooms for me in a house shared with us by a Nursing Home managed by a European Lady friend of his. But the course of an interned person's fight for freedom no more than that of love runs smooth. In the improving serenity of the State atmosphere there came a bolt from the blue. Hitherto the whole affair of internment, its modification and final withdrawal, had been settled by word of mouth. There was no *record*. But in the course of the ordinary routine came a communication from the Political Agent of the State, informing His Highness that the Government of India had asked where I was, and (without asking the State or being informed by it) Sir James Meston (how did he come to know of it, officially or demo-officially?) had written back to say that the Nawab of Rampur had interned me. This when the internment order had already been withdrawn! The Nawab now tried to persuade me to remain at Rampur where he would place a garden and a palace at the disposal of myself, wife and children. But we remained firm and insisted on going to Mussoorie. While this was going on a more serious communication came from the Political Agent, asking (1) what conditions had been attached to my internment, (2) whether I was confined in the Palace one day and night and most puzzling of all, (3) whether the Nawab's action was "voluntary"! This upset the Nawab considerably, but at last he wrote back saying that his action was "voluntary", but that in view of my ill-health and the ill-health of my people at Rampur, he had consented to let leave the State. *He wanted to know if Government objected to my being set free.* Pending the receipt of a reply to his significant query he asked me to remain at Rampur. The reply came and it was to the effect that Government had no objection. I, therefore, left Rampur with Shaukat, and my doctor,

and reached Delhi on the 14th May, after a month's stay at Rampur. On the 18th I was going to Ajmere to take part in the anniversary of the Chishti Saint's passing away, and on the 22nd, on my return, we were to go to Mussoorie. On the 15th May, Mr. Hailey, the Chief Commissioner interned not only myself, but my brother Shaukat who had done so much to obtain the annulment of my internment at Rampur! On the 21st we took up our residence at Mehrauli (where the Qutab Minar is) in a dilapidated house lent by a friend when we could secure nothing else for accommodation.

Mr. Hailey resolutely refused to sanction an allowance for the extra expenditure incurred in having to maintain a third establishment at Mehrauli[1] in addition to those at Delhi and Rampur.

A month later he appointed a censor to scrutinize all we wrote for publication, and worse than this, the entire *Hamdard* was to be pre-censored. The result was that the next three issues of the paper were *entirely* condemned, except some (but not *all*) telegrams about the war etc. received from England through Reuter and some English papers in India.

You can imagine the heat of Mehrauli during May and June. I passed a month there, and feared that my diabetes would grow worse. Contrary to this apprehension I improved marvellously. Even "diabetic gout" which was a bye-product of diabetes that had manifested itself in May, had left me by the middle of June. The rains were being expected - and Mehrauli is very pleasant then - when one fine morning orders came that *in 5 hours* a motor would come for us; we would have to live at a hill station reserved for the Gorkha and Garhwal Brigade in the U.P.; if we wished to take *anything* with us, we should send in with a servant to catch a train leaving Delhi in 6 or 7 hours.

We were also told that Government had sanctioned a "subsistance allowance" of Rs. 250 a month for me and the same *minus* the pension of Rs. 150 for my brother who had retired at the age of 40 after 17 year's service in the Opium Department with the praise of all his superiors and his modest pension to console him, in order to devote himself to public work. I may explain that when Hailey had refused to grant this on more than one occasion, our friends had

1. Mehrauli is a village near Delhi. It is known because of the tomb of the great saint Khawaja Bakhtiar Kaki,

started a Fund for the purpose and it was expected that at least 1000/- a month could thus be guaranteed. Now, however, Government had come forward with 250/- and 100/- respectively for me and my brother who had retired two years before when his salary was 600/- a month ! My brother protested against the amount of the allowance and I protested against the transfer to a damp hill-station in the monsoons, where my "gout" was bound to return. Both protests proved unavailing. At 2 p.m. on the 23rd June we were quietly motored to Shahdara station where we joined the 4.30 train which took us to Landsdowne. Had it not been for a connection missed by the train, which gave us 24 hours at Moradabad, we would have reached a cold and damp hill-station with nothing but the silk suits we were wearing at noon on a June day near Delhi.

As apprehended, my gout returned immediately on reaching Landsdowne - in fact on the way up itself. Again I wrote to Government and after a month and a half I learnt in August that my request to be allowed to go to Delhi and be interned there or at *Mehrauli* and my brother's to be allowed to go to Rampur in September to look after his Cotton Press and Ginning Factory could not be acceded to, but that a transfer to some under place was under consideration.

We were not allowed to attend the Trustees' Meeting or the Moslem University Association Meeting at Aligarh and I was told *after a fortnight* in reply to a request by wire to be allowed to see my daughter who was critically ill at Rampur and to take her to Delhi for medical consultation, that as the doctor and hakeem whom I wished to consult were *then* at Rampur. My request could not be acceded to. As it happened, my wife could not wait for my arrival too long and had taken over my daughter to Delhi, before Government found that our doctor and hakeem had gone to Rampur !

The question of a transfer from Landsdowne[1] which was stated to be under consideration in August was settled in November last, when we were transferred to this place, which is exceedingly badly served in the matter of railway trains. Here we found that the C.I.D. of the Government of India—a subordinate of my friend Sir Charles Cleveland, who had, while we were both in England in the autumn of 1913 vainly made me a tempting offer of joining Lord

1. Landsdowne is a hill station in the north of Uttar Pradesh.

Curzon,[1] Sir John Hewett and others even more eminent with Tory Party against Lord Hardinge's anti-partition policy-had taken a house of us, but had forgotten to furnish it. For nearly three months we managed to live with as little furniture as a Japanese household, and now when we were expecting friends to come and could accommodate them in a *furnished* house, orders came, requiring us to ask for and obtain the Deputy Commissioner's permission before receiving outside visitors. We asked for sanction to publish a communication in the Press stating the recent orders so that our visitors could come prepared for a possible disappointment. This was not allowed, but we were assured that the object of the order was not to restrict our freedom to receive outside visitors but to enable the Deputy Commissioner to know who they are. To this we have replied, consenting to furnish the names of our guests to the Deputy Commissioner if only we are not required to apply for permission and obtain it before receiving them. The only train connecting the U. P. with this place comes here at midnight, and imagine our guests turning up at that hour unannounced, as they often do, and being told from behind closed doors that we could not receive them before obtaining the Deputy Commissioner's permission—who may be in camp off the railway—and asking them to shift for themselves as best they could in a strange place with no resources and at an unearthly hour.

I forgot to tell you that all our correspondance—outgoing as well as incoming—is censored. In this connection we have had little difficulty, except through a member of the Provincial Service the character of which I have attempted to describe in my evidence before your Commission. Luckily we have a fair-minded Indian Deputy Commissioner in Sir Gangadhar Chitnavis' brother to whom we could appeal when his substitute in his absence in camp refuses to pass a letter or wire. He is retiring at the end of this month and Mr. Hemmingway is going to replace him.

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1. George Nathaniel Curzon (1859-1925) was the Viceroy and the Governor-General of India, 1899-1905. Before coming to India he held very responsible posts in England. He was Under-Secretary of State for India, 1891-92 and for Foreign Affairs, 1895-98. He travelled vastly in Asia before 1895.

This is the history of our internment during the last 10 mo interspersed with the dull story of a diabetic's many ailments. sure I must have wearied you, but you have only your in' "change of address" cared to thank for it.

My dear Mr. Macdonald, I don't complain. In fact I am that I am tasting some of the first-fruits of a nation's fight freedom. And when I take refuge in a Moslem's "fanaticisn which, if secular even a non-conformist conscience would "heroism", though non-conformists certainly *started* a "fanatics am consoled by the thought that Allah has punished a truant His appointed path very lightly - But I often yearn to know wh was that the officials responsible for our internment on the *re* The real cause we know only too well. But the ostensible cause be anything from traffic in High Treason by means of an intr with the Kaiser or Sultan to the time-honoured offence of tryir destroy the prestige of the village watchman. Well, my own person is of too little moment. But the proverbial straw breaks the car back. The Mussalmans, and especially their newspapers, have suff a great deal in recent years. (I forgot to tell you that the Ce killed my Urdu paper also within 7 weeks, by condemning ev thing, except what nobody cared to read, and Mr. Hailey refusec tell the editorial staff what the censor's instructions were and they should eschew. My entire business is at a standstill and I i to live on 250/- a month, family and all). If the results are bad at least shall not be responsible. Lord Crewe gave credit to the I. for the present state of India. So do I. Repression has cert succeeded hitherto. But if in the end it fails, the failure too sh be debited to the proper account. That's all I have to say to you men like yourself who have a voice-howevei unheard in the coun of the British democracy.

I must close this letter now with many apologies and with request that you will inform such friends and acquaintances as I h in England, particularly the Cottons. Mr. Swinney, Mr. Massinghi Mr. Nevinson (unless he is still at the front), Mr. E. D. Mason, the Hon. Aubrigh Herbert (Has he entirely recovered from wounds ?) about the facts relating to our internment.

I hope to write to Mr. Brockway thanking him for continuin send the *Labour Leader* and to notify the "change of address."

With kind regards and condoling with you on the sad deaths of Sir Henry Cotton and Mr. Keir Hardy whom I knew years ago, I remain,

Yours very truly,
(Sd.)- MOHAMED ALI

Source:
Proceedings of the Home Deptt., 1916.

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LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO QAMRUL HUDA[1]

(Unpublished)

Chhindwara, C.P.
4th March 1916.

Dear Mr. Qamrul Huda,

Many thanks for your letter of the 22nd February which I regret I could not acknowledge earlier as I was busy corresponding with Government about the fresh restrictions it has imposed on our liberty. You will know something about them from the draft questions (IV V and VI) which I am sending you in response to your kind invitation. I trust they will assist you in framing the questions which you tell me you are determined to put. This letter will reach you by the 7th or 8th and will be in time for the meetings towards the end of the Sessions. As you know the Act which the Council passed last March has deprived us of the right of every citizen in a civilized state to demand a trial the moment his liberty has been assailed. Even the *Times* wrote under the title "A Historic Judgment" a leading article explaining how five Judges of the High Court (I think) sat the other day to decide whether the Defence of the Realm Acts had given the King in Council power to issue regulations which had the effect of suspending the Habeas Corpus Act and allowing His Majesty's Home Secretary to intern a naturalized German. And the *Times* says that they found that this was so, although, according to the *Times* also the House of Commons would be shocked to discover that this was the effect of an Act it had passed so unsuspectingly. But there the Home Secretary can intern only persons of "hostile origin or associations." Here Indians who have never seen Kaisar or Sultan,

1. Qamrul-Huda was a leading lawyer of Calcutta and a member of the Legislative Council.

Hapsburg, Hohan Zollern nor Osmanli Turk, let alone "hostile origin" have been interned even without their offence being specified. The Law Courts are barred to us but the door of the Council that barred the doors of the Courts is still open to us if one can muster up sufficient courage to ask a few honest and well-meant questions. I will not thank you, as I have said before for doing what you regard as your plain duty. But once more I express my admiration of your honest determination. The only other recourse open to me is to memorialize the Government myself, and I am going to do that by the 15th. By the way, I have noted the true facts as answers to the Draft questions after the questions themselves for your information.

Goodbye for the present.

Yours affectionately,
(Sd)- MOHAMAD ALI

P.S. Do send me copy of the questions you put and replies received.

COPY

Draft Questions

I. (a) Will the Government be pleased to state whether in the case of those about to be interned in consequence of the Local Government forming an opinion that there are reasonable grounds for believing that they have acted, are acting or are about to act in a manner prejudicial to the public safety, an opportunity is given to them, whether before or after interning them, to explain to the satisfaction of Government any circumstances that are likely to induce, or may have induced, Government to form such an opinion?

(b) Is their action which is believed to be prejudicial to the public safety at any time specified?

(c) Was such an opportunity as is described in (a) given to Messrs. Shaukat Ali and Muhammad Ali and were their actions on which their internment was based at any time specified?

II. (a) Is it true that three different Local Governments or Administrations have hitherto successively passed orders interning Messrs. Shaukat Ali and Muhammad Ali within their territorial jurisdictions in consequence of having formed the opinion that there were reasonable grounds for believing that had acted in a manner prejudicial to the public safety?

(b) Did each of these Local Governments make independent inquiries into the allegations against these gentlemen or did some of them accept the opinions of other Local Governments and formed them the basis of their own orders?

(c) Will Government be pleased to place on the table of the Council a copy of the correspondence, if any, that has taken place between the Local Governments concerned and the Government of India, or among the Local Governments themselves in connection with their internment?

III. (a) Will Government be pleased to state what restrictions were originally imposed on the liberty of Messrs. Shaukat Ali and Muhammed Ali?

(b) What further restrictions have since been imposed and when?

(c) For what new offences, if any, were the additional restrictions imposed?

(d) Has any opportunity been given to them at any time whether before or after imposing fresh restrictions, to explain to the satisfaction of Government any circumstances in consequence of which they were imposed?

IV. (a) Is it a fact that the Government of Central Provinces has since last February restricted the freedom of Messrs. Shaukat Ali and Muhammed Ali to receive visitors by requiring them to receive no visitors other than persons residing within the town of Chhindwara where they are interned, without permission previously obtained from the Deputy Commissioner of Chhindwara?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state the circumstances necessitating this fresh restriction and whether Messrs. Shaukat Ali and Muhammed Ali were given opportunity to show cause why it should not be imposed?

(c) It is a fact that the Chief Secretary to the C.P. Government, whose sanction was required under existing orders and applied for, refused to accord them the permission to have a note published in the Press merely reproducing the "new order and warning intending outside visitors to come prepared for the possibility of the request of Messrs. Shaukat Ali and Muhammad Ali to be allowed to receive them not being acceded to by the Deputy Commissioner of Chhindwara?

(d) Were they assured in reply to the request to publish the foregoing warning for the benefit of their numerous friends and others desirous of visiting them that "the object of the order was not to place restrictions on their receiving visits from such persons, but to enable the Deputy Commissioner to keep himself informed as to who their outside visitors were?

(e) Subsequently to this assurance did they submit a representation to the C.P. Government requesting that the order may be withdrawn, or, at least, modified in such a manner that they may be required to furnish the name of their outside visitors to the Deputy Commissioner and may not be required to apply for the Deputy Commissioner's permission and obtain it before receiving their visitors. Did they state that in the absence of any information about the new restriction, visitors were likely to reach Chhindwara, often by the only train from Jubbulpore arriving at midnight, without permission having been obtained for them, and that they were in consequence likely to be put to considerable trouble in finding suitable accommodation in a place with few resources or at such a late hour?

(f) Will Government be pleased to state if the order in question has been withdrawn or modified as suggested?

V. (a) Is it a fact Messrs Shaukat Ali and Muhammad Ali have recently been informed by Government that their future correspondence "must be confined to purely domestic and private business affairs" and that correspondence of the sort of the addressed by Mr. Muhammad Ali to Mr. Mazher-ul-Haque to Bombay and read out at the latter's suggestion at the last session of the All-India Moslem League "will not in future be permitted to be sent on"?

(b) Is the Government aware that the telegram to which objection has been taken ran as follows:—

"Realising the historic nature of this Session but not being in a position to be by your side and with you all, I pray to God to assist you with His wisdom in guiding our deliberations and to fortify us all with the strength of our faith. I trust coming generations will have cause to bless you and your fellow-workers and on God's great Judgment Day, we shall not be ashamed to face Him and our Prophet. In God's name go forward. God be with you."

(c) Will Government be please to state to what objection has been taken in this telegram and in what way it is calculated to prejudice the public safety or the defence of India?

VI. (a) Is it a fact that Mr. Shaukat Ali was ordered by the Government of the Central Provinces to take no part in conducting the service in any Mosque or other public place of worship?

(b) Was this restrictive order based on a police report and, if so, will Government be pleased to place a copy of it on the table of the Council?

(c) Was Mr. Shaukat Ali given any opportunity to disprove the contents of this report or to show cause why no such order should be passed?

(d) Is it true that he submitted a representation against the order and that it has since been withdrawn after warning him not to refer to Turkey or the Turks in his supplications after the service?

(e) Is it true that although he readily acknowledged at the very outset that he had prayed for the success of Islam and the Caliph of the Prophet and still prays for them, he has challenged the truth of the report that he had prayed for the success of the Turkish arms in the present war on the occasion that he had, in response to the request of the congregation, officiated as the Imam at the Juma prayers, and has he asked Government if it is to be understood that he is not allowed to pray for the success of Islam and the Caliph?

(f) If so, what answer has been communicated to him?

VII. (a) Is it a fact that successive orders interning Messrs. Shaukat Ali and Muhammed Ali within certain prescribed limits have invariably contained a proviso allowing them to leave those limits with the previous permission of the Chief Secretary to Government or, in one case of the District Magistrate?

(b) Is it a fact that such permission has been applied for on various occasions at each of the places where they have been successively interned, but invariably refused, although on the last occasion they had explained that they would have no objection to a police escort?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state under what circumstances it is contemplated in the orders of internment issued to them to permit them to leave the prescribed limits?

(d) Do those circumstances cover a visit to places beyond the prescribed limits with a view to participate as members of public bodies connected with education in their deliberations?

VIII. (a) Is it a fact that the publisher and the printer of Mr. Muhammad Ali's Urdu daily newspaper, the *Hamdard*, of Delhi were required by the Chief Commissioner of Delhi to publish nothing in that journal unless it had been previously submitted for the scrutiny to an Extra Assistant Commissioner appointed in this behalf and approved by him?

(b) Were verbal and written representations made to Government by or on behalf of Mr. Muhammed Ali against these orders and the manner in which they were being administered?

(c) In particular, was it complained that those responsible for conducting the *Hamdard* were, in spite of repeated requests, refused all enlightenment on the subject of matter which Government did not desire in the interest of the public safety to appear in the *Hamdard* and was a copy of the instructions supplied by Government to the Censor to guide him in the discharge of his duties repeatedly applied for and refused?

(d) If so, Will Government be pleased to state why it was refused, and will it now kindly place it on the table of the Council?

(e) Is it a fact that matter which was being freely published in the English and Vernacular papers was not allowed by the Censor to appear in the *Hamdard*?

(f) Will Government be pleased to state whether any other newspaper has been similarly treated and if not, what circumstances induced Government to single out the *Hamdard* for such treatment?

(g) Is it a fact that in consequence of the Censorship, the publication of the *Hamdard* involved Mr. Muhammad Ali in considerable financial loss and that it has therefore, ceased to appear?

IX. Will Government be pleased to state if it contemplates cancelling the restrictive orders passed against Messrs, S.A. and M.A. in the near future or having them tried openly in a properly constituted court of Law?

Answers as to facts known to us.

I (c) No. II (a) Yes III (d) No.
IV (a) Yes (b) No. (c) Yes (d) Yes (e) Yes (f) No.
V (a) Yes (b) Yes VI (a) Yes (b) Yes
(c) No (d) Yes (e) Yes VII (a) Yes
(b) Yes VIII (a) Yes (b) Yes (c) Yes
(e) Yes (f) No (g) Yes.

Source:

Proceeding of the Home Deptt., March, 1916

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LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI TO MAULANA ABDUL BARI OF FIRANGI MAHEL, LUCKNOW.[1] (TRANSLATED FROM URDU BY THE GOVERNMENT]

(*Unpublished*)

Chhindwara, C.P.,
30th June 1916.

Your Honour-Salutations-Your order (*i.e.* letter) was received-Muhammad Ali wrote a reply yesterday but he was angry and his anger was just, and one to be proud of. I saw and tore it up. I do not understand why responsible people have lost their senses so much that not to speak of statesmanship they do not exercise even ordinary wisdom. Even if such an absurd and baseless news had been received through Reuter's telegram it should never have been published because its result was nothing also except creating a great unrest and restlessness among Muhammadans generally. In the first place it is absolutely false that the Sherif of Mecca[2] will commit such an absurd thing viz., that he would raise the standard of revolt against the Caliph of the Prophet and the servant of Harmain Shari fain and thereby blacken his face in both the religion and the world, and would go

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1. Maulana Abdul Bari (1878-1926) received entire education from the Maulvis. He toured Arabia and West Asian countries and was critical to the British influence there. He was one of the founder-member of the Anjuman-e-Khuddam-e-Ka'ba and Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Hind. He founded Maddarsa-e-Nizamia at Firangi Mahel, Lucknow.
2. Sherif Husain of Mecca was a descendant of the Prophet. He revolted against the Turks and threw the Turkish suzerains from Arabia.

away from this world disgraced and humiliated and secondly that he would do this when to wage war during these sacred months is forbidden, and thirdly supposing that he did such a thing and has rebelled against his master his position was that of a rebel and the whole Islamic world, instead of sympathising with him, would curse him and also his sympathisers. The manner in which this news has been published is the more regrettable inasmuch as in spite of so much (self) control and patience on our part our religious feelings are thus being trampled down. This is only a punishment to us from God for our speaking falsehood and our (regard) for expediency. To exercise expediency in affairs of religion was a great sin, and this is the punishment for it. We should have in the very beginning clearly stated that notwithstanding one war, but even if there were a thousand wars His Majesty the Sultan, may his dominions ever remain, was the Caliph of the Prophet and the Servant of the Harmain Shari fain, and would continue to remain so, and (further) that we Muhammadans would listen to no one in this connection particularly (none of those) who were not Moslems and were from among the infidels. These are religious matters, and the law has given us full permission, and religious freedom. We have accepted the Government (only) on this condition. False has reached its limit. Not has a rebellion taken place in the holy Hedjaz but Muhammadans have themselves become mad, and bombarded the Kerbala-i-Mualla,[3] and Najaf-i-Ashraf.[3] This is not a quarrel between the Sunnis and Sheas. The Karbala-i-Mualla and Najaf-i-Ashraf are as dear to us as to the biggest Shea. To have a joke (*i.e.* to interfere) in such religious affairs without thinking will be a fatal mistake. I saw yesterday your honour's telegram to the Viceroy in the *Bombay Chronicle*. My heart was strengthened and pleased. God will reward your honour for this. Kindly let me know full particulars about the meeting. Probably detailed accounts will appear in English and Urdu (newspapers). What wisdom was this to injure the hearts of seven crores of Muhammadans in the whole country and to excite them.

If such interference in religious matters is attempted it will become incumbent on us to leave the country. Your honour may kindly let us know the religious commands in this connection, according to the Qoran, and the Shariat of Islam. Mr. Muhammad Ali's was extremely bad but (he) was satisfied to see your honour's telegram. Your

3. These are the holy places of Muslims in Iraq.

honour knows that our nephew Khurshid Ali is also now very ill and (I am) anxious how to work the factory during the cotton harvest will be carried on. If it is not carried on there will be a loss of Rs. 10,000/- because interest has to be paid on 1¼ lakhs. There is no one at home. All our business is looked after by the sister. She has explained all the things clearly. I was thinking myself (about this) and I like her opinion that we should explain (lit. express) our necessity to Government, and request that during the cotton harvest Government should intern us at Rampur. Muhammad Ali would look after the account and the work of the factory while I would purchase cotton. I am sending an application today, and hope that it may be granted. It was necessary that we should go by August as in September cleaning and repairing of all *Chaks* commences. Your honour may pray that full attention may be paid (by Government) to our necessity, and that we may have the honour of kissing your feet (*i.e.* paying respect) at Lucknow. God willing, the Roza (fast) will begin day after tomorrow. We will also hear the Holy Qoran this year. The mosque is situated at a distance of half a mile from the bungalow. The Hafiz Sahib has a very fine voice. May God accept our Rozas, and may this sacred month pass in remembrance of God. Muhammad Ali's health by the favour of God is good. It was kindness that he, poor fellow, could eat mangoes also this year. Tomorrow (his) urine will again be sent for examination. The Civil Surgeon is a sensible man and takes care of us. The season is very pleasant and the Roza will hardly be troublesome. The Ramzan will not be enjoyable this year. Your honour may pray (for us). Please convey our salaams to Maulvi Salamat Ullah Sahib, Bhai Altaf, Ihsan, Qutub Mian Sahib, Maulvi Inayat Ullah Sahib, and love to Ilyas and Mumtaz Mian Sahib.[4] God grant that your honour with all your family and relations may be well. Mother sends salaams and prayers to you. Muhammed Ali's wife's and... Zahid send salaams. After a full cloudy month the atmosphere has cleared yesterday. All the hills and land are green. Rampur will be very bad as regards weather but it cannot be helped. It is a pity that (we) shall not be able to see Shah Abdul Khair Sahib[5] there as he has now gone to Quetta where he has a large number of followers. He used to spend the hot weather there-but the Nawab Sahib requested him to stay. He has gone there

4. These were the friends of the Ali Brothers.
5. Shah Adul Khair was a religious leader.

now. He is very able and good saint, and does not concern himself with any thing else except worshipping (God and remaining in seclusion).

Your honour (met him) at Delhi. Qazi Wahiduddin Sahib[6] had composed a very interesting verse. (Yours) letters will be awaited. Your honour may continue to pray God to keep us strong in the true religion, and give us power to do some service to religion.

Your honour's Servant.
SHAUKAT ALI.

Source:
Procedings of the Home Deptt.
September, 1916

6. He was a journalist and a poet and sometimes edited *Muslim Gazette* of Lucknow.

21

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO SIR JAMES DuBOULAY[1] PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

(*Unpublished*)

Chhindwara,
Central Provinces 24th March 1916.

Dear Sir James DuBoulay,

I am writing this letter under somewhat peculiar circumstances, and would request you to kindly place it before His Excellency the Viceroy at your earliest convenience and before His Excellency leaves Delhi.

As His Excellency is no doubt aware, I was interned, along with my brother, by order of the Hon'ble the Chief Commissioner of Delhi, in May 1915. I had not, however, hitherto appealed against the order of internment, trusting that His Excellency's Government would set aside that order Suo motu or in response to public appeals.

At the suggestion of some friends, however, I had drawn up a Memorial, appealing against the order of internment and subsequent orders curtailing my liberty still further, with a view to submit it to the Governor-General-in-Council, through the prescribed channel of the Local Administration, before His Excellency, who was personally conversant in a far greater degree with the matters dealt with in my Memorial than his successor is expected to be, laid down the reins of office and finally left India.

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1. James DuBoulay (1868-1945) I.C.S. was private secretary to Governor of Bombay, 1901-07; Secretary to the Government of Bombay, 1909; Private Secretary to the Viceroy, 1910-16; knighted, 1911; Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department. 1916-19.

As it is customary to have such representations printed and it would have been very inconvenient for the local Administration as well as the Governor-General-in-Council to go through a somewhat lengthy representation in manuscript, I naturally decided to have it printed, and in order to expedite the work, in view of His Excellency's impending departure, requested my friend Mr. Horniman, Editor of the *BOMBAY CHRONICLE* to arrange it with the Printer of the CHRONICLE Press, with its large resources for rapid work of this kind, to have my Memorial printed there as early as possible. I may anticipate a little here and say that Mr. Horniman wired to me that it would be printed in a week, and subsequently wired again to say that it could be printed in four days or even less.

However, when on the 5th instant I was sending the first portion of the Mss. to Bombay, Mr. Hemingway, I.C.S., the new Deputy Commissioner of Chhindwara, asked me to see him, and when I called on him, told me that as the Memorial would be all over India before long if it was sent even for printing only through a gentleman who was the Editor of a newspaper. Mr. Horniman subsequently wired to say that it would be treated as strictly confidential—(But) Mr. Hemingway, preferred that it should be printed at the Government Press at Nagpur. Having been apprised some days previously of my intention to send the Mss. to Bombay, in the ordinary course of scrutinizing my correspondence, he told me he had already written to Nagpur on the subject. As my object was to have my Memorial printed wherever the work could be done expeditiously and not to have it published in the *BOMBAY CHRONICLE*, I told the Deputy Commissioner that I had no objection. But I made it perfectly clear that I particularly desired the Memorial to be considered by Lord Hardinge, and was therefore anxious to submit it through the Hon'ble the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces well before His Excellency left India, and not later than the 15th instant.

All this took place on the 5th instant. After having heard nothing for some days, I sent a reminder to M. Hemingway, but in answer to my repeated reminders I could only elicit this information from him that he too had more than once wired to Nagpur, and that probably I would hear from the Chief Secretary directly by wire. This expectation was, however, not realized, and it was only on the 22nd instant, 17 days after Mr. Hemingway stopping the Mss. from going to

Bombay, and perhaps fully three weeks after his referring the matter to the Local Administration, that I heard from Mr. Hemingway to the effect that I should send the Memorial to the Chief Secretary, but at the same time intimating that he had "said nothing about the printing, merely that the Chief Commissioner wants to see it."

As the Mss. was not in a fit state to be sent to him, being merely a rough draft legible enough for the compositors and proof readers but nothing more, and was intended to be revised while reading the proofs in consultation with my legal advisors to whom also proofs were to be submitted for their opinion, I inform the Deputy Commissioner accordingly, and at the same time expressed my belief that even if I sent the semi-legible rough draft as it was, it was unlikely to reach His Excellency in time to serve any useful purpose, considering that Lord Hardinge was expected to depart from Delhi only a week later.

Today, on the 24th March, I am informed by the Deputy Commissioner that the Chief Commissioner's orders are that the Memorial could not be allowed to go to the printers until it has been passed by the Chief Commissioner.

Had even this decision been communicated to me on the 6th or 7th instant, it would not have been quite impossible for me to have access to Lord Hardinge, though I submit that after my consenting so readily to have it printed at the Government Press itself the Hon'ble Chief Commissioner had every opportunity of scrutinising my Memorial even before it was formally submitted to him for the favour of forwarding it to the Governor-General-in-Council. As it is, I have been prevented through no latches of my own from seeking justice at the hands of the Viceroy who was in an exceptionally good position to do me justice.

Since the Defence of India Act had already barred the doors of every law court in the Empire against me, I had only one door left open to me here to seek justice, and that was by appealing to the Governor-General-in-Council. So far as Lord Hardinge is concerned that door has also been barred against me equally effectively by Executive action which I have described here for His Excellency's information.

I trust you will kindly place this letter before him prior to his departure from Delhi.

Believe me,

Yours truly,
MOHAMAD ALI.

Sir James DuBoulay
K.C.I.E.
Private Secretary to H.E. the Viceroy,
Delhi.

Source:
proceedings of the Home Deptt., April, 1916

22

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO CHITNAVIS (DEPUTY COMMISSIONER)

(*Unpublished*)

Chhindwara
23 January 1916

Dear Mr. Chitnavis,

Our recent conversation and my brother's last letter must have prepared you for most incidents happening the moment your back is turned. The latest concerns the enclosed letter addressed to Mr. Gandhi[1] of South Africa fame. I wrote this in reply to his letter of sympathy in which he had inquired about the restrictions on our liberty. Mr. Ishtiak Ali without letting me know anything about it kept this letter out the post sent to him on the 21st and on coming to know this I sent for it. I was then told through my servant that Mr. Ishtiak Ali was sending it to you. On this I asked him to return it to me and was told again verbally through my servant that the letter had already been sent to you. He asked for a written requisition. When I sent one, the letter was returned but just to check me he has had the impertinence to note some remarks on it.

I have shown the letter to Mr. Durgapershad who finds nothing objectionable therein but we both agree that since in the first ins-

1. M.K. Gandhi (1969-1948) was educated in India and England. He came to India in 1914 from Africa where he had gone to organise voluntary ambulance services. Between 1917-1918 Gandhi participated in two peasant movements in Champaran (Bihar) and Kaira (Gujarat). He opposed Rowlatt Bill in 1918, joined the Khilafat movement in 1919 and started Non-co-operation movement in 1920. From that time Gandhiji devoted himself to the cause of Indian Independence. He is the Father of Indian Nation.

tance the letter had been sent to another and not passed by him it should be sent to you.

I wish you could manage to eliminate this constant ... friction in our dealings with officials and arrange for some one else for "censor" our letter in your absence. Our liberty has been seriously restricted and our privacy in correspondence has been intended upon. If this cannot be changed we should at least be left above this. But so long as Mr. Ishtiak Ali has unsatisfied ambitions and he provides a ready-made opportunity for the display of loyalty we are certain we should be left in peace.

Exceedingly regretting the necessity of troubling you,

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
MOHAMED ALI

Source:
Shaukat Ali Papers

23

LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI TO CHITNAVIS

(Unpublished)

Chhindwara, C.P.
4-2-1916

Dear Sir,

I have just received your letter and the two letters that you had retained. One is addressed to my younger sister who was coming to see me here and the other of my younger niece who was pinning to see me. You have mentioned that you have not received orders from D.C. (Deputy Commissioner) yet to pass direct any correspondence in which there is a reference of a politics in any shape. I am really surprised that you find politics in letters like these. I did not discuss politics with my sister and niece. When I write letter to console them over their separation from us and bring quotations from Koran to help them or statements based on the teachings of Islam, you call it politics. I am forwarding both letters to you to kindly mark passages which are considered by you discussing politics. It is very annoying not to know what to write and what not to write. You refused last time to give any directions when I offered even to take off objectionable passages. Please let me know as early as you can.

Yours Faithfullly,
SHAUKAT ALI

Source:
Shaukat Ali Papers

24

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO B.G. TILAK[1]

(Unpublished)

B 'ISM-I-'LLAH-I-' R-RAHMAN-I-' R-RAHIM

Chhindwara, C.P.
November 12, 1916

Dear Mr. Tilak,

This morning's paper brought the welcome news that the Bombay High Court had reversed the order of the District Magistrate of Poona demanding from you security "tó be of good behaviours" in consequence of the speeches you had recently delivered while inaugurating the Home Rule League.

As you are probably aware, the Censor of our correspondence is not permitted to pass any correspondence of a political character, so that even if I feel minded to do so I cannot deal with the Political aspects of the High Court decision nor with those of the decision which it has upset. I, however, think I am at liberty even as a political detenu to congratulate you on so single a vindication of yourself and your recent speeches. Nevertheless I *refrain*; and I do so because after all our characters can best be vindicated by ourselves and our people when we stand at the bar of our conscience and of public opinion. In fact, there is yet a higher, and not only comparatively more infalliable tribunal but absolutely so, which

1. Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920) was educated at Poona. He contributed to the *Kesari* and the *Mahratta* and roused the people against British. He stood for Swaraj and expressed his ideas for Swaraj in the Calcutta session of the Congress in 1906. He belonged to the extremist school of the Congress. Along with Annie Besant, he launched the Home Rule movement for India.

alone is competent to pronounce a final judgment on men and their work. To the Divine Judge who fill the judgment seat of this august tribunal on His great Judgment Day must we leave the vindication of our character.

Nor do I offer you congratulations on the reversal of what only too many people are apt to regard a humiliating decision. To one who has even in his old age willingly and cheerfully gone through so much pain and suffering as you have in the cause of what you held to be truth and justice without betraying the slightest consideration of consequences when duty dictated action, and who has borne with an equal temper the smiles and the frowns of fortune, the offer of congratulations as an escape from further persecution would in any case be a futility and an impertinence; and all the more so in this case, when it is the Bombay High Court that deserves to be congratulated on its good sense and the vindication of Law and Justice.

Nevertheless, I trust you will permit (me) to convey to you on my own behalf as well as my brother's our heartiest wishes that God may in His goodness vouchsafe to you in this the twilight of your life as wide and as long continued an opportunity as possible to serve Truth and Justice and the cause of this great but unhappy country of ours.

I must confess I had long been a pray to grave misgivings about the catholocity of your political and social ideals and the extent of the connotation of your patriotism. I confess this all the more readily to-day because long before to-day I learnt to regret these misgivings and have already offered my apologies to you in the spirit if not in the flesh. It may perhaps interest you to know that what brushed these doubts and misgivings aside like a so many cobwebs was your daring and the determination that you have shown in sustaining your self-respect. This may not sound as prize of your altruism; but, to my mind, in the long run, it is as safe a test as any. He who would not for the world jeopardise his own self-respect of the humblest of God's creatures to be placed in jeopardy howsoever insistent may be the claims of self-aggrandisement or of the aggrandisment of his own caste, sect, community or nation. He alone is not a slave who abhors slavery in equal degree for the meanest of his fellow-being. Your courage, resolution and fortitude are an example to us younger men, whatever be our politics; and these have con-

vinced me that after going through all this you could never contemplate with equanimity, much less desire, that even a particle of the same suffering should be inflicted on a fellow-countryman, no matter of what caste or creed, equally earnest in the defence of his freedom and self-respect.

With our deepest regards as humble fellow-servants, of one God and devoted fellow-workers for one Motherland,

I remain,
Sincerely and reverentially yours,
Sd./-MOHAMED ALI

Shriman Lokamanya,
Balgangadhar Tilak,
Gaekwad Wada,
Poona.

P.S.:- My brother, Mr. Shaukat Ali wishes me to send you his best compliments. I don't observe you have ever met him. He has met Mr. Kalkar once with me at the Ahmedabad Station when I was at Baroda. Kindly remember both of us to him.

Sd./-MOHAMED ALI

Source:
Home Department. November, 1916

25

LETTER FROM THE MOTHER OF MOHAMED ALI TO SIR SUBRAMANIAM IYER,[1] PRESIDENT OF THE MADRAS HOME RULE LEAGUE

(Unpublished)

"With the name of God, the Most Merciful and the Most Compassionate."

Chhindwara, C.P.
August 4, 1917

Dear Sir Subramaniam Iyer,

I feel this letter will surprise you a good deal, not only because it comes from a total stranger, but also because the writer is a Muslim woman brought up in the old orthodox ways, according to which women are seldom supposed to address any communication to strangers, and never to men.

But these are extraordinary times, and things are changing so fast that no one should feel astonished if an old woman like myself addressed, at the sacrifice of a little orthodoxy, a letter to one so universally respected and reverenced as yourself on a subject which fills at present the minds of all.

Old people, and especially old women, are not generally fond of changes, but, old as I am, I welcome those that I see taking place around me today. Indeed it does my heart good to see that the people

1. Sir S. Subramaniam Iyer (1842-1924) was the grand old man of south India. As a great admirer of Annie Besant he agreed to serve as the Hon. President of the All-India Home Rule League established in Madras in April 1916.

of this country are now beginning to return to the faiths that moved their ancestors to do good and great deeds, and that we, the Mussalmans, too, are at last finding our way back to that old and unpolluted source of inspiration, namely, Islam.

In the glorious days of our great Prophet (on whom be Peace and God's Benediction) and in those of his early Caliphs (with whom God was satisfied), we were all free enough to do good, and we, the women of Islam, also used to shoulder our share of the burden and march along with our men, even to the holy Wars. It is true that in recent times we have been leading a much more retired life; but nevertheless, I do not think that we women are at all inclined to shirk to-day such duties as the changing times may once more require us to perfom.

In my own case, God, in His great wisdom, willed it that I should shoulder a heavier burden than ordinarily falls to our share. The sudden and premature death of my husband left me a widow at the age of 27, with six children to bring up and educate, (of whom the youngest Muhammad Ali was less than two years old) beside looking after their property with a firm belief in the Divine protection of those that struggle to do good, and with the solace and inspiration of my faith, I sat to work, and in spite of many difficulties and disabilities, I had my reward when all my sons were at last old enough to enter life on their own account. They no longer needed my assistance and I could now turn contentedly to such religious devotions as had always drawn me towards themselves.

But when my two youngest boys, Shaukat Ali and Mohamed Ali, were interned more than two years ago, I felt that my place was by their side, though they were now fully grown up men and fathers of families. From the first day of their undeserved internment, I have shared their exile and have never regretted it. It is an honour and privilege reserved only for those whom God chooses for the purpose, to suffer discomforts and privations and even death, in the service of one's faith and country, and I am more than content that my sons were the first to be interned under the Defence of India Act barely two months after it had been passed. Of my own free will and even against the wishes of my children, I have decided to share all their sufferings and privations and to do what an old woman like me can do for my God and my country.

As for Home Rule, for which I have noted, naturally with pride, it is one of my own sex and age that has worked so earnestly, well,

I may claim that for 40 years I have been in a very practical sort of way a real Home Ruler; and, judging by results, I do not think I have done so badly, I therefore feel that I have established a right to demand it for my country, and when I heard many months ago that, residing as I did in the Central Province, I could join the Maharashtra Home Rule League, inaugurated by that good and brave man Lokamanya Tilak, I along with my daughter-in-law (Mohamed Ali's wife), and even other adult member of our household, was sworn in as a member. In these days, it is not sufficient merely to have a belief. One must openly profess it, and, if need be, proclaim it from the house-top.

I have always felt a great desire to meet our greatly gifted and brave sister, Annie Besant,[2] and more so after her very affectionate and cheering letters to my sons during their internment. She was extremely good and kind to them and used to send them all her publications. Please convey to her our sincere love and affection and assure her and her two fellow-sufferers and lieutenants of our deep devotion to them. I regard it as a great misfortune that I have never met her. My son, Shaukat Ali, was for several years posted at Benares as a Government Officer in the Opium Department and met her there and although I visited him for fairly a long period practically in every station to which he was posted, curiously enough it was Benares only where I failed to stay with him. However, God willing, we shall meet some day, and in the meantime I shall continually pray for her. To her in her internment, I have nothing but congratulations to offer. The prayers of young and old, Muslims and Hindus, in a united India are with her, and they will make up for all the petty persecutions of a breed of little men which she is now experiencing even as we have experienced them these 27 months.

Beyond my prayers and congratulations I have little to offer her. But I feel that to the fund opened in connection with her internment I must offer our little mite. We have never been rich, since the internment of my sons, we are decidedly poor. Neither of them is in a position to conduct his business, and instead of anything being earned several thousand of rupees a year have to be paid as interest alone

2. Annie Besant (1847-1933) founded the Central Hindu College in Benares to promote religious mysticism. She started the Home Rule movement in India and devoted herself to championing the cause of Indian Independence.

on borrowed capital. To meet these claims and the daily expenses of a large family for which my sons subsistence allowance could not obviously suffice, I have sold off the greater portion of our *jagir* which my husband's father had earned for services rendered to the British during the mutiny, when, working on behalf of his master, the then Nawab of Rampore, he saved the lives of many of the English residents and officials in Rohilkhand and Kumaon. So long as my children were young and I had to maintain them, I had regarded it as a point of honour never to part with any portion of this property, and so far not an acre of it had been allowed to pass out of our hands in spite of the greatest financial stress. But since it was the internment of the grandsons that in 1917 demanded the sale of the *jagir* earned by the grand-father in 1857, I considered myself in a very absolved and I am not a bit sorry that I have sold such a large slice of it. As for the future, I have no misgivings about my sons and their children. I firmly believe in our Oriental proverb, "*Mulk-i-Khuda tang neest, pa-i-mera lang neest*" (God's dominions are not within narrow limits; and my foot is not lame). But even to-day I want our great sister to share our modest pocket money and I would be greatly obliged if you would kindly accept Rs. 10 per month from us. I have sent a M.O., for the first month and should like to tell you that every member of our household have contributed something to make up this amount, the children and the servants have pressed their mites with marked fervour.

In this connection, I should like to say one thing more. My own sons are young and strong, and have innumerable friends and fellow-workers all over the country who would be only too glad to give any assistance they needed. But my mother's heart bleeds as I feel sure does my good sister Annie Besant's for the hundreds of brave unfortunate lads condemned without a hearing, removed from their friends and families, and deprived among other things, of their liberty to earn a living for themselves and those depending on them. My own experience during the last two and a quarter years, have, as it was brought at home to me what hundreds of mothers must be feeling to-day whose homes have been left desolate to them, and still more what those young men must be feeling who have no mother to look after their comfort and console them in their exile. One hears every now and then a heart-rending tale of sorrow and privations and dimly realises that there must be many others equally heart-rending that never read one's ear's. Cannot something be done in the way of

giving them legal advice and pecuniary help? Even if then unfortunate men must lost their liberty, why need they and their families, that could have done nothing to merit such a fate, be left to starve? Could not our Home Rule League keep some sort of record of every person interned and not merely of those that are generally known to the public, and see that they were given such assistance as they and theirs needed? I am sure if an appeal was made every part of India would contribute something for such a noble cause even if it be a handful of grain every day. And our generous and selfless sister, Annie Besant, rightly deserves the honour that such a fund should bear her name, and I feel it would please her more than anything else, if her sufferings and possible privations moved all India to think of those who suffer like her and to provide for their needs. As for my own suffering, great as they must be, they cannot be unendurable. We women may be physically weak and may not distinguish ourselves like men in action; but God has in His great mercy given us greater power to love and to hear. And where we love greatly, we also suffer greatly and gladly. These days cannot last long, and there can be but one end. I have firm faith in those noble words of our Holy Book that have always given courage and comfort to every one experiencing sufferings and suspense: "*Nasr-um-min-Allah-I-Wa-Fath-Un-Qareeb*" (Success cometh from God and victory is high).

God be with you,

Yours very truly,
Sd./Abadi Bano Abdul Ali Begam,
Mother of Shaukat Ali and Mohamed Ali

Source:
Mohamed Ali Papers
MOH/L-3194

26

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI AND SHAUKAT ALI TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER

(*Unpublished*)

B-ism-i-'llah-i-r-Rahman-i-'r-Raheem

Dated Chhindwara, Central Province, the 12th October 1917.

To.—The Editor of the "*Pioneer*," Allahabad
(United Provinces).

It appears that in your issue of Monday last, while commenting on the address presented to Mrs. Besant by the Home Rule League of Allahabad, you stated as follows :—

"What, too, are we to make of this extraordinary license allowed to anyone and everyone to go on agitating for the release of men whose connection with the King's enemies has been fully established to the satisfaction of Government ? Surely the time has come for Government to make up its mind to govern."

May we request you to state whether it is to us that you refer in the passage quoted above ? If so, and there seems to be no doubt that it is so, may we request you to state also the nature of our connection with the King's enemies, the particular enemies with whom we are alleged to have connection, the manner in which it has been fully established and the particular Government to whose satisfaction it has been so established.

We trust you will admit that it would be far more straightforward as well as far more satisfactory to all concerned to specify all this than to defame us merely by such innuendoes.

Yours sincerely

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DEMI-OFFICIAL FROM MR. SHAUKAT ALI, TO THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE HON'BLE THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER, NAGPUR, DATED CHHINDWARA, THE 5TH DECEMBER 1917.

I invite your attention to the fact that so long ago as on August 10th, I had addressed to you a letter requesting you to place it before the Hon'ble the Chief Commissioner for his information and for being forwarded, if necessary, to the Government of India for their orders. In that letter I had explained in full detail the effect of our internment on our respective businesses, and in particular the annual recurring out-of-pocket expenses on account of interest on borrowed capital, rent, etc., permanent establishments and annual cleaning. etc., amounting in the case of my own Cotton Ginning and Pressing Factory at Rampur, to Rs. 12,665 and, in the case of Mr. Mahomed Ali's Printing Press at Delhi, to Rs. 2,160 annually. I had explained that these figures did not include the losses sustained by us during the periods when work was continued in our absence during our internment, nor the losses sustained by Mr. Mahomed Ali on the sale of his belongings when he was finally compelled to close his business at Delhi, and that, of course, they did not include the profits which we naturally expected to earn in our respective businesses.

2. I had further explained that to pay these expenses we had to sell our shares of the family *Jagir* which our grandfather had received for saving the lives of numerous Englishmen and Englishwomen, including Government officials, in Rohilkhand and Kumaon during the Mutiny of 1857-58 when he had acted on behalf of his august master the then Nawab of Rampur State. I had clearly intimated that having sold our shares of this *Jagir* we had now nothing to draw upon for the payment of these expenses which were recurring and inevitable, and that although we had borne all the discomforts and humiliations and all the petty persecution to which

we had been subjected during our enforced exile as cheerfully as we could, and had shown a capacity for endurance of which we need not be ashamed, this was a matter which had now passed beyond the limits of our endurance.

3. After stating all this I had requested Government to release us from our wholly undeserved internment so that we could continue our business and retrieve our financial position, and that, without prejudice to this request, if our internment could not terminate immediately, we should be interned at Rampur for the Cotton season, September to February (both inclusive), and that arrangements should be made with His Highness the Nawab of Rampur for that purpose. I had finally urged that if that was not feasible, then the least the Government must do was to pay to us the money we had lost since our internment, and were losing every day that our internment was prolonged. I had, nevertheless, suggested that if Government desired to recoup itself for such disbursements, we would not object to its working our concerns itself.

4. I had clearly indicated that we had already had to incur, besides losses on working the conçerns in our absence during our internment and the non-realisation of naturally expected profits, out-of-pocket expenses as detailed in paragraph 7 and 8 of that letter, for the years 1915-16 and 1916-17, and that if we were not accorded permission to work the Factory at Rampur during 1917-18 also, the same thing was bound to happen for the third year in succession. I had therefore requested that my representation might be taken into consideration without avoidable delay.

5. Having received not even an acknowledgment by the 29th August, I addressed to you a reminder on that date and explained why an early decision was imperative, and expected that it would be communicated to me by the 1st of September. In spite of this no notice was taken of my representation of August 10th, nor of the reminder of August 29th, nor again of the wires addressed to you at intervals of a fortnight thereafter, and to this day my requests have remained not only unanswered but also unacknowledged. I do not desire to say anything that may be construed as wanting in proper courtesy; but I think I shall be permitted to say that neither consideration nor courtesy has been extended to us by Government even in this matter in which no question of the Defence of India or the maintenance of public safety is involved.

6. I am compelled to repeat what I said in my representation of August 10th, that, howsoever necessary it may be for reasons of State to intern a person and prevent him from carrying on his activities with a full and unfettered freedom, it can never be in the interest of the State nor in accordance with justice and equity to ruin him financially. This could never have been the intention of the Legislature when it passed the Defence of India Act. And yet that is exactly what has been done in our case. For some time Government refused to give us any internment allowance in spite of repeated representations, and only when the Moslem public opened a Fund at different centres for assisting us financially was an allowance fixed. But then too it was meagre beyond description. However, as my brother's printing press and his daily Urdu paper with its large circulation were still there to bring him a fairly large income—in fact, about tenfold of the meagre allowance fixed for him—and as I had every hope that I would be permitted to work my Factory at Rampur in the Cotton Season and would thus become wholly independent of the paltry sum of Rs. 100 that was fixed for me, after deducting from my allowance the amount I had earned in 17 years of meritorious work as a responsible public servant by way of pension, little was said about the matter. But an order issued under the same Act, that had deprived us of our liberty, strangled my brother's paper, the daily *Hamdard*, and my request for a transfer to Rampur for the Cotton season was also refused and thus both of us and our respective families were made entirely dependant for our financial resources on the so-called subsistence allowances that Government had fixed for us in entirely different financial circumstances. We put up with this for a year, but finding it impossible to lower our standard of living to such an inordinate extent as to be capable of being maintained on such meagre fraction of our incomes in the several years, my brother represented the facts to Government more than a year ago. That representation only resulted in an increase of our allowances by the paltry sums of Rs. 50 each per mensem, and a further representation, explaining in great detail the rate of expenditure which has been incurred by us for many years preceding our internment, and requesting Government to fix our allowances at the modest rate of Rs. 500 each (including, in my case, the amount of my pension also, which was the only other source of income still left to us), was not even forwarded to the Government of India who were declared to be the competent authority to decide the matter. Since then even the travelling expenses of our families to

our home and back which used to be paid by Government have been refused in spite of such urgent necessity as the Civil Surgeon's insistence on a change of air as the only possible remedy he could suggest for a sick child after five months' fruitless treatment here.

7. Another year's experience of the subsistence allowances of Rs. 300 and Rs. 150 respectively for my brother and myself, in addition to my pension of Rs. 150, has convinced us that, much as we desire to be no burden to the overladen tax-payers of our country, it is impossible for us to maintain on these amounts even the decencies of life, not to speak of comforts, to which men in our position in life are used, and to educate three boys and six girls. Unless Government, in the light of the above facts, reconsiders our representation withheld by the Hon'ble the Chief Commissioner last year, we shall have to address it again on this subject very soon. But quite irrespective of that, it must be obvious to Government that it is imposible for us to continue to pay approximately Rs. 15,000 a year as out-of-pocket expenses alone on account of our concerns out of subsistence allowances and pension, whether these total Rs. 600 per mensem, as at present, or Rs.1,000, as we desire. And since the government is apparently unwilling to restore us to liberty, including the liberty to earn our living and honorably meet all our liabilities, because it professes to view our restoration to liberty as a possible menace to public safety and the defence of India, it is only fair that it should maintain us and our families as we used to maintain ourselves before we were interned, and should meet all legitimate demands against us and recoup us for our losses.

8. As the Government is aware, one of the creditors from whom I had borrowed money wherewith to erect my factory has already filed a suit against me to recover it, as interest has not been regularly paid by me, and in spite of my repeated requests to permit me to visit Rampur, and either settle the case out of court or look after its conduct, Government has not yet enabled me to do so.

9. Since then I have received from the principal creditor who had advanced me no less than Rs. 80,000 for the erection of my factory several letters pressing me for payment of interest now long overdue, and at last his solicitors have also begun to press me, as the enclosed copy of their letter of September 4th, and the accompanying statement of account would show. Of Rs.20,104 due to the

end of March 1917, I have already paid Rs. 6,488 according to this statement of account, in April 1916, and to the balance of Rs. 13,616 must now be added another Rs. 6,000 on account of interest for the year 1917-18, which is a dead loss owing to the presumed refusal of Government to permit me to work the factory at Rampur during the current season. I know of no resource from which I could pay off this huge amount of approximately Rs. 20,000 to one creditor alone on account of interest, after having paid off nearly Rs. 6,500 already during my internment, unless Government pays it for me, as it is in all fairness bound to do.

10. Besides these two creditors there are others also to whom I owe large enough sums of money, and who have so far been exceedingly considerate in the matter of a demand of the interest due to them during the last 3 years. But that is no reason why they should be ignored, and, in fact, their considerateness makes my own obligation to them all the more pressing on me. I have already given in my representation of August 10th, the details of amounts borrowed by me for my factory, and the interest that accrues yearly on them. If Government desires I shall submit a complete statement of the amount of interest due for the period of my internment, and the figures of other out-of-pocket expenses actually paid or payable for the same period, and also of the losses actually sustained on working the Factory in my enforced absence (in the vain hope of being able to pay out-of-pocket expenses), together with an estimate of reasonable profits expected but not realised owing to my internment.

11. If desired, a similar statement would be furnished by my brother, Mr. Mohamed Ali also.

12. I now trust that no further delay would be permitted in the consideration of this important and urgent matter, and that I shall be enabled by Government, along with my brother, to meet all legitimate demands of our creditors which but for our internment we would have honourably met ourselves long before this. My principal creditor, the head of the firm of Messrs. Piarally Abdullah Dossal & Co. of Bombay, has just paid me a visit here, and I trust I shall not be made to keep him waiting much longer in suspense as to the date on which I shall discharge my obligations to the firm whose overdue interest already exceeds a quarter of the principal amount borrowed from them in spite of payments

already made to them. I would therefore request you to acknowledge the receipt of this communication at your very earliest convenience, and while forwarding it to the Government of India to invite their attention to the fact that the matter has been left in abeyance for close upon four months now and deserves immediate settlement. As I have already stated, we have no reason to be ashamed of the endurance that we have shown during the last 2½ years of our internment; but obviously it is not possible for us to discharge honourably the financial obligations that we had incurred before our internment when we were free to earn to the fullest of our capacity, unless the Government is prepared to dischagre honourably the obligations that it has incurred by depriving us of that liberty.

Source:

Home Department, February 1918

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LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO SIR JAMES DuBOULAY, HOME MEMBER OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, SIMLA

(Unpublished)

B-ism-i-'llah-i-r-Rahman-i-'r-Raheem

Chhindwara,
Central Provinces,
October 27, 1917,

My Dear Sir James DuBoulay,

I have been thinking of writing this letter for some time, bu what I desire to say has been so difficult to compress within th ordinary dimensions of a letter that it could not be written earlie and even now I am far from certain that I shall be able to conve to you what we feel.

I have learnt from the Local Administration that it has forwarde to you a telegram of ours addressed to the Hon'ble the Raj Saheb of Mahmudabad and Messrs. Jinnah[1] and Mazhar

1. Mohammad Ali Jinnah (1875-1948) was born at Karachi an educated in Karachi and England. He was called to the Ba from Lincoln's Inn in 1896 and on his return practised at th Bombay High Court. From the beginning he took active part i politics. Dadabhai Naoroji exercised tremendous influence on hi political activities and it was that influence which led him to joi the Indian National Congress. In 1913 he joined the All Indi Muslim League also and he continued the membership both the political associations. Circumstances forced him t withdraw from the Congress and he became and ardent membe of the League. In 1940 he raised the demand for a separat and independent Pakistan and ultimately got it in 1947. H is called *Quaid-e-Azam*, the great leader by millions of hi admirers and is the father of Pakistani nation.

Haq[2] in which, after denying the authorship of such reasonable letters as had been attributed to us, we had requested that they might be shown to us.

In this connection I shall like to declare once more that neither of us has had any share in the composition or transmission of any treasonable communication or document of any kind, that neither of us has sent at any time any communication of such a nature or even of a political or public nature to His Majesty the Ameer of Kabul or any one else in Afghanistan, and that neither of us has sent throughout the period of our internment here or in the United Provinces any uncensored letter such as we have recently been informed that my brother is alleged to have addressed to our spiritual adviser Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb of Firangi Mahel, Lucknow.

There is another and a still more important matter to which I would also like to refer. We have been greatly pained to note that strange meanings have been attached to some very simple words that we had added to the undertaking required from us and that they too came in the way of our expected release.

Circumstanced as we were, and having regard to these difficult and abnormal times, and the apparently wide scope of the undertaking required from us, it seemed to us that all future misunderstanding would be avoided if we invited the attention of Government to our recognised religious beliefs and practices by adding those words, and we could not conceive that any similar significance would be imported into them. I am sure you have known us sufficiently long to be able to add to this statement of ours your own testimony also that we are frank to a fault and that all our dealings have been fair and above board. We can therefore safely leave it to you to judge whether sinister mental reservations of the kind so strangely suspected are in our line. I need hardly add that the indication of such

2. Mazhar-ul-Haq (1866-1930) belonged to a wealthy family of landholder. He was called to the Bar in 1891 and practised Law at Chapra. He was a staunch nationalist; vehemently opposed separate electorate; organised Home Rule movement in Bihar. He assisted Mahatma Gandhi in Champaran satyagrah. He presided over the Annual session of the All-India Muslim League in 1915.

sinister reservation's in the manner suspected would not have done credit of the meanest intelligence.

Many of our friends have, however, rightly pointed out to us that the fullest religious freedom is already guaranteed to every subject of His Majesty, and that the addition which we had made was therefore unnecessary and superfluous.

We hope this would entirely satisfy you that we are not only God-fearing Mussalmans but also patriotic citizens of the Empire and Loyal subjects of the king-Emperor and that no danger to public safety can be apprehended from our release.

A memorable declaration has been made regarding the goal of British policy in India, and all the auspices seem good for the future if only public tranquillity was fully assured. For our part we are as anxious as any one else that there should be as little excitement in the country at this important juncture as possible and are prepared to cooperate with Government very heartily to this end.

I shall only add that I have a personal interest too in the suppression of all needless excitement of the last few months which has greatly aggravated my diabetes, and, what I feel still more deeply, it has played havoc with the health of my mother whom we shall like to spare all worry at her time of life, when worry very nearly spells death. I therefore hope that Government would, review their recent decision in the light of this statement and finally decide our cases at any early date.

Apologising for the length of this letter.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

The Hon 'ble Sir James H. DuBoulay, K.C.S.I., C.I.E.,
Home Member of the Government of India, Simla.

Source:
Home Department, January 1919

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LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO RAJA OF MUHAMADABAD

(Unpublished)

B-ism-i-'Illah-i-r-Rahman-i-'r-Rahim

Chhindwara (C.P.)
April 6, 1917.

My dear Raja Saheb,

I received only yesterday your letter of the 31st March, evidently posted only on the 22nd April in reply to my wire. I must confess I had begun to despair of a reply; but better late than never. In the meantime I hope you have received my long and detailed letter, though I cannot say whether it was forwarded on to you to Calcutta or not. A reply to that letter would now be too late for all practical purposes; but if my letter succeeds in some measure turning you away from the course of action which rumour ascribed to you I would think that it had been more than answered. And whether it does that or not, I shall at least have the satisfaction of knowing that I had added my own also to the still small voice of conscience which it is not easy for any one to silence even though after having reached a great eminence one may fail at times to heed the more full throated public opinion. In your case, however, I ought not to have the least fear of public opinion being disregarded for apart from your own inclination, the career of our friend, the Aga Khan, with all the lessons that it has to teach us who work for the public-weal and need the indispensable support of public confidence could not so soon have faded away from our memories that we could think of cajoling or coercing our people instead of convincing them.

I am glad that my views are known to you, which is only natural, since I have not changed them at all except for the growth of the conviction that for the present at least we are incapable of even a college, let alone the University which we once dreamt of controlling. This is certainly a new growth, being the result of the most painful experience of my short public life which is one of the few compensating gains I have reaped during my internment. For absence of courage there may or may not be any excuse but for the absence of all energy in those that presume to represent the public there is absolutely more. Well, as I have said there has been no change in my views except for this newly grown conviction, and that, as you will agree, disinclines me all the more to rush my people and force them to do that in a hurry which we all know only too well they will have ample reason to repent at leisure.

But it was not so much to inflict on you or on my old friend Sajjad, my own only too well known views, but in order to know what new views were yours that I had requested you to send Sajjad to us here. During the last five years of great stress, there has been such a surprisingly great and variegated development of your views in regard to the Moslem University and even in the methods adopted to obtain the support of public opinion that I was most anxious to verify the none too generous rumours that had even reached me in the solitude of this wilderness. As my last letter must have given you a fair idea of what they were, I shall say no more about it.

But, by the way, there is one thing about which I should like to know something more than what your letter tells me. You say that last year you had made a request to the Government of India for permission to be granted to me to attend the meeting of the Foundation Committee at Lucknow. That is the first time, I have heard of it. Of course, I knew that you had sent Khaliq to Simla in October 1915 to try, at my request, for permission being granted to us to attend the University Association meeting that was about to be held at Aligarh, and it had all ended with one of the usual assurance of there being not the least prospect of success in the endeavour given by the only member of the Government of India who was approached. I knew also that you were anxious to ascertain my views last April, and in fact to induce me to throw in my lot with yours, and that first Sajjad and subsequently Ahsan-ur-Rahman were sent to me with the concurrence of Sir Sankaran Nair and presumably the Government of India. But I was not aware that you

had ever entertained any hope of permission being granted to me to attend the meeting and had even rushed (sic) a request to the Government in that behalf.

However none of these is a matter of great moment. What really matters is what you do today; for although repeated misfortunes in their selection of leaders and spokesmen and accrediting them as such have at least tired the people and made them sick of all collective action, and I do not expect any great opposition being shown to you if you still persist in following the line which rumour has attributed to you, I have not the slightest doubt that public opinion would only be silenced but never for a moment convinced and that when next you, as their leader, will need the strength of their support, strength that comes only from the backing of honest and unforced convictions, not from sullen acquiescence, and a necessity which no public worker can know how soon he may feel...you will not get it. I desire to conjure up no bogies and wayside ghouls to persuade you to alter by one hairs breadth the view you may now be holding, and as a matter of fact this letter would not reach you in time to persuade you to do anything of the sort. But I thought that I owed it to you as a humble worker of yours to tell you whither all this would lead.

What you say about the proposed college at Dehra Dun in the first I have heard about the proposal, if indeed such a one there is. I see the need of another institution where we could work out in practice the theories and ideals which we who are the firstborns of Sir Syed and Aligarh, so to speak, have long cherished and have in fact received from our late leader as a priceless heritage. There would, in the more material course, have been no need of another institution for that purpose, for was not Aligarh to be the banyan tree of education of which each fresh sapling was to be a new root ? But none knows better than you do that a small chaque (sic) or camarilla of weak, dull and unscrupulous persons who are fond of monopolising the little power that through their own weak-kneed policy is allowed to be exercised by the Trustees, have opposed every aspiration of the Old Boys of the College with regard to their Alma Mater. A man in your position could well have freed Aligarh from this incubus; but at one time you remained sullenly in your tents and more recently you have allowed yourself to drift alongside of them, with the result that many of us are inclined to give up Aligarh rather than the dreams they had dreamt there and to build

up a new fabric, unpretentious and poor though it be, on which they could bestow all their intelligence and all their natural affection. For my part, I am frankly enough in sympathy with them; but I shall not give up the Aligarh that has given me those dreams. Therefore I deserve the new College to be located at Aligarh so that our example if not our exertions may redeem our beloved old Alma Mater. But for that purpose I would not be dependant on the support of any but those who have our ideals to the full. I am against, all class warfare and would not encourage anything suggestive of class prejudice. But I cannot obviously help it if the actions of the rich themselves should compel those who do not share their wealth nor their weakness should give the new institution the character of a poor man's college for the poor and managed by the poor. The rich man has his place in the economy of a nation and I would be the last to use him merely as a milch-cow. So many of the public concerns in which I have been deeply interested have been assisted, and that most liberally—and by none more liberally that by yourself—that I would be a ungrateful as I would be false to my conviction if I encouraged class suspicions, class prejudices and class war-fare. But I own that experience has only too painfully and too well convinced me also that very gifted-horse from a rich man's stable must be carefully examined, not so much in the mouth, as with a view of ensure that it is we that would ride it and not it that would bestride us. I own that the largest and in the aggregate the greater part of the subscriptions to the Moslem University have come from the rich. But I would nevertheless contest with anyone who desires to establish it the truth of any assumption that the greater part of the thought and energy and selflessness that went to shape the project and carry it into execution was the contribution of the rich.

All this should convince you that I shall be no party to any diversion of the University Fund to any new project. But I think it only fair to make it clear as I can that of the, rich persuaded to insist on the return of their donations to them unless the poor give up all their cherished dreams and sacrifice their independence on the same altar on which the rich sacrifice theirs only too frequently, then, I, for one, deprived of much of blessing as I am, shall do whatever lies within my power and reach to persuade the poor to fight the matter out and in the last resort of claim back all that they have contributed and finally to have nothing to do with any concern

of the rich, whether it be so-called University or the travesty of the great and noble foundation of that great poor man, Sir Syed,[1] which his noble disciple, the still poorer Viqar-ul-Mulk,[2] had done so much to reclaim for the poor and the truly proud. "Al-Faqir-u-Fakhr-i-" said the greatest of the poor, and today also poverty shall be our pride. This will be war to the bitter end, but God knows, and you know that we shall not have provoked it.

However, let me hope that all these apprehensions are idle and that the humblest of the rich and the proudest of the poor shall once more work together as in the earliest days of Islam for the benefit of all Mussalmans and the greater glory of God, and that we shall continue to work under you and under the banner of our Holy Prophet.

With the best of the wishes,

I remain,
Yours sincerely.

Source:
Mohamed Ali Papers
MOH/L—3112

1. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898) belonged to a noble family of Delhi. He entered Government service and rose to be a sub-ordinate judge. In the Mutiny he rendered meritorious services to the English and tried to ameliorate the conditions of the Muslims. He founded the MAO College at Aligarh in 1877 which developed into, the Muslim University Aligarh in 1920. He was a great educationist and a social reformer.
2. Mushtaq Husain, Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk (1841-1917) was one of the colleagues of Sir Syed. He succeded Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk as the Secretary of the MAO College. In December 1906, he presided over the meeting of the Muslim elite which founded the All-India Muslim League.

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LETTER FROM THE MOTHER OF MOHAMED ALI TO SIR SUBRAMANYAM IYER

(*Unpublished*)

With the name of God, the Most Merciful and the Most Compassionate.

Chhindwara, (C.P.)
September 4th, 1917.

Dear Sir Subramanyam Iyer,

I am sorry that I am so very late in acknowledging the receipt of your two very kind letters. I have been anxious for some time to write to you and enquire about the health of our sister Annie Besant about whom I have heard so many alarming reports. I can well realize what this internment, with all its attending worries and recurring pin-pricks, means to one of her temperament and habits. Why, it would wear away a much younger person.

All the same, she must get strong and well. She ought to call to her aid all the Soul-Force she possesses, and I know God in His mercy has endowed her with great faith and spiritual power. In these days of trial how constantly do these words of the Holy Quran come to my mind:

"O ye that believe, seek assistance in fortitude
and prayer."

What a beautiful combination, Patience and Prayer! So rest-giving and powerful! I am sure my dear sister does not need from any of us such advice. She must have always believed in that and must have now been relying on the efficacy of fortitude and prayer.

And she ought to feel happy. Are not her efforts bearing fruit? If she and her brave companions are interned, what does it matter? Are there not thousands even in the remotest corners of the country that have taken up her work to-day? If one Home Rule Flag can forcibly be taken down, would not a thousand new ones go up? Judging from our own feelings I can well believe that thousands and hundreds of thousands would put up the beautiful Red and Green over their homes, and over their hearts too. Throughout my long widowhood I have never worn colours. But I shall now pin the Red and Green below the honoured badge of the *Khaddama-i-ka'ba* (Servants of the ka'ba) on my white Burqa' or veiled mantle which I wear when going out. It is not of bravado or show only. It means that one is not ashamed of one's beliefs nor afraid of the consequence of their declaration. To tell you the truth, I feel more sorry than angry at the ignorance of the people in power who can imagine that such petty show of authority could really strengthen the foundations of Empire. Would that they could come to see these things with our eyes, and learn, what even the women in purdah know only too well, that petty exhibitions of this kind of temper only serve to' undermine the foundation of all authority.

Only a few years ago the shouting of "Bande Mataram" an innocent enough, and, in fact a laudable cry, was considered seditious in Bengal, and many a patriot had to suffer pain and undergo humiliation on that account. And yet I am told that all big meetings commence to-day with the singing of "Bande Mataram" and that the very same brave Bengali youths that used to be punished for the very same words now use them as a recognised battle-cry as they march for to die, if need be, and for ever wipe out the vile calumny against the good name of their people and their manhood. That ought to teach a lesson to those that forcibly take down Home Rule Flags. I have no doubt that they would one day learn it. May it be that they may learn in time! The Persian poet spoke truly when he said:

Har chi dà nà kunad kunad nàdàn
Lék bàd az khara' bi-é-bisyà r!"

(All that the wise man doeth, doeth the fool also-but only after a word of mischief hath already been done!)

Kindly tell my sister that though no prophet or soothsayer, I feel certain that, God willing, she and I would see Home Rule established in India before we die. But if God wills that we must leave this world before our heart's desire was fulfilled, then we will cheerfully and thankfully obey His will and will be glad to face our Maker, happy in the belief that perchance our earnest efforts for the cause of our faith and our people and for suffering humanity may make up for our deficiencies in other respects, and He in His great goodness may grant us grace and pardon. We "strives in the path of God'' can only do our best, and must leave the rest to Him.

We have had great sorrow lately in the untimely and tragic death of R.M. Ghulam Husain, editor of *The New Era.* Though born in the Punjab and no relation of ours, he was loved by us very dearly and as our own. For more than 6 years he was looked upon as a member of our family, having been a true and devoted comrade and helper of my son Mohamed Ali. For some years he lived with my son as member of his household both at Calcutta and at Delhi, and it was my son and daughter-in-law who arranged only 3 years ago his marriage at Delhi and brought home the young and sweet bride who is alas! a widow today. One of the keenest sorrows that my sons and we all have experienced during their internment has been the refusal of Government to let them proceed to Lucknow and catch if only a last glimpse of that dear and brave companion of theirs, and so settle his affairs. But we console ourselves with the recollection of his visit to us here only a month before he passed away so suddenly and tragically from our midst. He had been planning this visit for the last two years, but every time that he arranged to come here something or other, generally of no moment, prevented it, and it was only now that the hand of Death was upon him that he came to see us, and as it were to bid us a last "good-bye." He came about '*Eed*' time with four other friends to have a three days holiday. And what a holiday it was! Our house was full of noise and laughter, and if an outsider had been these big over-grown school-boys talking and joking and laughing among themselves, he would never have thought that they had any cares or worries to trouble them, much less that they were experiencing great mental anguish and heart suffering. There was very little sleep these three days! Hot and loud discussions, old and new stories, jokes and laughter, with cricket thrown in for a change engaged

them. Need I tell you that the younger members of household were simply delighted with all this excitement and riotous living. And yet the Angle of Death had marked down one of the brightest among them-Ghulam Husain-so shy and modest and, as it were, apologetic, among strangers, boisterous and bubbling over with good humour and full of unrestrained laughter in the company of his intimate friends, and entirely loveable everywhere! I had noted a great change in him for good and marked a new seriousness that is the sure sign of true religiousness, and had hopefully insisted in my own quite way on a little more regularity in the matter of offering his daily prayers. Advice was never for long lost upon Ghulam Husain, and I never knew one who received the severest admonition from friends hardly older than himself, and sometime even younger, in such good part. His last words to me as he came to receive my parting blessings were that along with God's work that he was doing he would say his prayers also very regularly.

And he was young and strong, and life had so many good things for him, so far as we could judge. And he is gone! We are old people and death has no terrors for us. Who can make us forget that, although it is a big thing and a brave thing to die for a good cause, it is also at times a *good* thing? But is not a bigger and a braver, and at times, a harder thing, to *live for* it and *live up* to it, and work for it in the face of overwhelming difficulties and daily humiliation and pain? So I pray to God that He may vouchsafe to our good sister Annie Besant and to you, Sir, who are working so nobly and bravely, many many years yet of health and happiness and still greater usefulness. Kindly tell my sister that she must make up her mind to get well so as to spare all those that love her and this great country every anxiety on the score of health. I do hope that she is better and stronger now after a change of residence, in spite of the new worries that she has recently had.

I would so much like to have photographs of the three interned. But I had better warn you that one or two would not do. I could not arbitrate easily with so many claimants, young and old in the house? I send herewith some of ours taken at Lansdowne with a Kodak. They are not very good ones, but they would perhaps interest her.

I have sent you to-day a money order for Rs. 10 as our second monthly instalment towards the Besant Fund. I was rather surprised

to learn from Mohamed Ali that he was asked by Government a number of curious questions about my letter to you, and the most curious of them was the question of how it came about that I could afford to contribute as much as Rs. 10 a month to the Besant Fund? Evidently my letter to you was not carefully read. One who had only recently sold a portion of the family *Jagir* for Rs. 40,000, mainly to pay the liabilities of her sons at the rate of some Rs. 15,000 a year during the last two years of their internment, could surely afford to contribute such a small sum out of the sale proceeds, nor should the saving of ten rupees a month out of the expenses of a large household, by the giving up of a some little "luxury" appear so extraordinary, specially when it is remembered that it is for a cause so dear to our hearts. In any case, my own poor share was so small that I blush to name it, and the sum of Rs. 10 was made up of the mites of no less than 26 persons, big and small, who mean them to be the token of their great love for our dear and greatly oppressed sister and their devotion to the country for which she lives and works. But I suppose these things must continue a little while longer, and we must endure them.

God be with you all.
Believe me,

Yours very truly,
(Sd.) ABADI BANO ABDUL ALI BEGAM.

Source;
Mohamed Ali Papers
MOH/C 3112

31

LETTER FROM THE MOTHER OF MESSRS. MOHAMED ALI AND SHAUKAT ALI TO MRS. UMA NEHRU

"In the name of God, the Most Merciful and the Most Compassionate."

Chhindwara, (C.P.)
December 13th, 1917

My Dear Sister,

You will excuse my writing this letter to you; but the fact is that I was at a loss to know to whom to address it. I thought at last that it would be safe to write to you, as you are more likely to know things than we in this out-of-the-way corner of our country.

I see in the papers that, along with you and that brave sweet girl Nishat Begam (Begam Hasrat Mohani) I have to represent the women of the United Provinces on the All-India Ladies' Deputation which is to wait on the Secretary of State for India on the 18th instant at Madras. So far I have not been directly informed of this, formally or informally, by anybody. But I suppose it must be correct as several letters have come to me from Madras asking me to be the guest of the Moslem League and the Mussalmans there. It is on this supposition that I am writing this to inform you that I do not think I would be able to undertake such a long journey in my present state of health and mind, specially as I may have to undertake another long journey this month.

There are besides one or two other considerations on which I think I can freely and frankly speak to you, knowing full well that I would not be misunderstood. Whatever outsiders who hardly know our country even on the surface, may say about us, the "poor miserable purdah women of India," you know and I know what queens we are in our own little kingdoms, and what enormous

powers we wield over our households. The times have indeed changed, and demand from us newer methods of getting what we may want, and it may be permissible to-day to go even before strangers with our appeals, although we may be doubtful of the success of our mission. But may I not ask if it would not be better to bring the pressure of our united wills to bear on our own husbands, fathers, brothers, and sons instead of going abegging before others however exalted? I feel strongly on this point, and you must bear with one who belongs to the old Indian world though she tries to keep in touch with the new.

If a deputation like ours had ever waited on any old king of India, whether Hindu or Moslem, in ninetynine cases out of a hundred it would have brought back from "the Father of his People" all that it even if it had been refused to their men-folk a hundred times. What is more, the king would have thought it a unique honour conferred on him, and the bards of his court would have sung of it, and the ballads of the people would have immortalised this incident. The results of this deputation I cannot guess, but judging from the way in which our brave sister Annie Besant has been treated in her efforts for the preservation of the British Empire we may at least guess what we would get from the chivalrous Anglo-Indian Press for the honour Indian womanhood—say, for the honour of the manhood of India also, I would have liked that no such deputation was going to wait on the Secretary of State and the Viceroy, but that one should have gone out to the Congress and the Moslem League and declared openly and in clear terms what the women of Hindustan wanted from their men. I am sure whatever the women would have asked the men would have sooner or later provided. That is the lesson of History all over the world.

Besides these general considerations, I have another and a personal reason why I cannot join you all at Madras. The Secretary of State comes from a free country, and it is only natural that as a man he would have liked to go about when and where he liked and to discuss with those who were in a position to know what our country really needed to make it free and happy and great. But the powerful European Services that have everything to lose and nothing to gain from any and every inquiry of a truly searching character even if undertaken by their own countrymen who are used to freedom and popular control decided that he, should be, while in this country, a *purdanashin* like us and not see those who, including

my own sons interned here, whose request to have interviews with him has been refused by the Government of India, could put things plainly before him. It would indeed be extremely curious if, while he, a man, and one used all his life to the freedom and open air existence of the West, had been quietly put in *Purdah* to suit the exigencies of an Oriental country. I, who have been brought up all my life as a *purdanashin*, should go out of it. But even if I consented to give up all the conventions of a lifetime, I doubt if some convention or other would not be discovered for him in time to prevent me from speaking out my mind on some vital issue like respect for our faith, our lives and liberties and the honour of our manhood and womanhood, though I assure you it would never occur to me to put forward any personal petition. I reserve these for another and a higher authority that has never failed a petitioner, and, far from avoiding such petitions, himself invites them and also pledges himself in advance to grant them.

However, now that it has been definitely settled this deputation is to go, and the women of India have willingly consented to make this unique sacrifice for their Motherland, all that I can do is to pray to the Giver of all things to give you all success. There should be no difficulty in selecting another representative for me, and I do not doubt that she would prove far more useful than I would have done.

I was looking forward, dear sister, to meet you and other ladies of your family last October at Allahabad where we had been invited by Mr. Motilal Nehru[1] who is a friend of my sons. But God willed it

1. Pandit Motilal Nehru (1861-1931) practised at the Allahabad High Court. He took active part in politics from the beginning. He was elected President of the U.P. Congress and President of the Allahabad branch of the Home Rule League. He started a daily paper the *Independent*. He presided over the Amritsar session of the Indian National Congress in 1919, joined the Non-Cooperation but later founded the Swaraj party in 1923. He prepared the Nehru Report after All-Parties Conference in 1928. He was a brilliant lawyer, an eloquent speaker and a great nationalist.

otherwise, and it must have been for the best. We place our trust in Him and await His will and pleasure. So good-bye till better times succeed these and we are enabled to meet you.

Yours affectionate sister,
(Sd.) ABADI BANO.

Source:
Muslim Interness Series No. 1

32

LETTER FROM THE MOTHER OF MESSRS. SHAUKAT ALI AND MOHAMED ALI GIVING AN ACCOUNT OF THE VISIT OF THE C.I.D. DEPUTY TO CHHINDWARA

With the name of God, the Most Compassionate and the Most Merciful.

My sons and I have received in the course of the last fortnight a very large number of telegrams from all parts of India, from public men and public bodies as well as personal friends and relations, congratulating us on my sons' release and inviting them to various centres of public activity, anu latterly, just as in the early part of the fortnight, enquiries have poured in on us requiring confirmation of the general belief that my sons release had already been ordered.

I regret that it is not possible just now to thank the numerous senders of kind messages of congratulation or answer the anxions enquiries individually, and I have to rely upon the kind offices of the National Press of India for the purpose of expressing our gratitude as well as supplying the requisite information. But while giving expression in this manner to our sense of gratefulness at this unique outburst of public feeling, I should like to add that we shall not fail to thank all these kind friends individually also the moment we are in a position to do so.

To begin with, I must explain that up to the time of issuing this statement no orders have been received by my sons cancelling the orders interning them here and restricting their liberties in various ways; and as by the terms of these orders they are prohibited from publishing anything without the previous sanction of the Chief Commissioner of these Provinces, I have taken it upon myself to issue this statement,

The first intimation that we received here that the release of my sons was under consideration was conveyed to us in the following telegrams from their affectionate and chivalrous friend Mr. B.G. Horniman, the Editor of the *Bombay Chronicle*, who had often corresponded with them during their internment:—

> "Please let us know your intentions regarding Government's offer release. Suggest feasible to give assurance refrain from unconstitutional violent methods not merely for remainder of war but for all eternity. Government's offer is ungracious, but there is hope for country if you avail yourselves of it. Of course, do not wish to suggest anything involving misconstruction as admission of wrong methods in past. Umar and others have seen this and we wish only country's and your good."
>
> HORNIMAN

(The gentleman referred to in the telegram is my sons' friend Mr. Umar Subhani of Bombay).

Till then no offer had been received by my sons from the Government, nor did they know at the time the terms of the Government reply to the Hon'ble Mr. Jinnah's question regarding Mrs. Besant and her two lieutenants and to his supplementary question regarding my sons in the Imperial Legislative Council on the 5th September. Soon after perusing this telegram, which, though handed in at Bombay on the evening of the 5th September, was not received here before the morning of the 6th, and was not made available to us by the Censor before midday, the following reply was forwarded by my sons to the Censor with a view to obtain his sanction for transmission:—

> "Your telegram. Thanks. We have received no offer ourselves. Never unconstitutional or violent, we have always been God-fearing Moslems and law-abiding, lovers of our country, and always desire and hope to be. We place our people's fullest freedom above our own, and confident that our friends would never with us to prejudice that, we always welcome their counsel. But we cannot feel any joy at our own release if God-

fearing and valiant patriots like Mrs. Besant, Hasrat, Azad and Abdul Wali Khan here at Betul are not also released."

SHAUKAT ALI
MOHAMED ALI

The telegram was, however, referred by the Censor to the Local Administration, which, after some days refused to permit its transmissions. In the meantimes, the following telegram was actually despatched to Mr. Horniman on the 7th instant with the Censor's sanction:—

"Your telegram. Thanks. Our reply referred by Censor to Government. Place full reliance on friends."

SHAUKAT ALI
MOHAMED ALI

On the morning of the 7th September, however, a very significant incident happened. Mr. Abdul Majid, Deputy Superintendent of Police, (C.I.D.), who had arrived from Simla, called on my sons at our house here, and under instructions from Sir Charles Cleveland, Director of the Criminal Intelligence Department, showed to my sons the form of an undertaking initialled by Sir Charles Cleveland which, as he informed them; the latter desired them to give. It ran as follows:—

Undertaking—

I shall abstain during the remainder of the war from doing, writing, or saying anything intended or reasonably likely to encourage or assist the enemies of the King-Emperor. I shall also abstain from doing, writing, or saying anything intended or reasonably likely to be construed as an attack upon the allies and friends of the King-Emperor. I also promise to abstain from any violent or unconstitutional agitation which is likely to affect the public safety.

Explanation—

> The abstentions promised above are not intended to cause me to refrain from participation in politics within constitutional limits.
>
> (Sd.) C.R.C.

My sons conversed with Mr. Abdul Majid for some time regarding the nature and scope of the required undertaking, after which Mohamed Ali went to his room to fetch a pen to draft the undertaking that Shaukat Ali and he were prepared to give, and for the first time I learnt from him that they had received an offer from Government. I viewed their conditional restoration to liberty now even more seriously than their loss of it nearly two and a half years ago, and consequently desired to know the conditions on which it was now offered to be restored and their decision regarding that offer. I therefore put on my burqa' and, disregarding to some extent, under the stress of a great emergency, the custom that prevails among our people, I went to my sons' study where they were conversing with the emissary of Government, and addressed him as nearly as I can now remember in these words:—

> "I understand that the Government desires at last to do justice to my sons by restoring them to liberty. Naturally I rejoice at this, for who can know better than myself what they have had to endure during the last 28 months and what it has cost them to endure it? But I understand that Government now requires them to give an undertaking of some sort. Well, they are old enough to understand what is not to their advantage, and also to understand what is right and what is wrong. They certainly do not need any advice from me to-day. But I should like you to tell Government from me that they owe me a duty prior to any they may owe to others; for I bore them for nine months and suckled them in their infancy, and our Prophet has told them that their paradise lies under my feet. Knowing, as I do, all that they have suffered during their long exile and internment, I can also understand how hard it must be for them to reject any terms the acceptance of which means the end of all this long drawn misery. But I want Government to know that

if in order to escape from their sufferings they will promise anything in the least contrary to the dictates of their faith or the interests of their country, God will, I feel sure, give enough strength to my mother's heart and these palsied hands to throttle them that instant, dear as they are to me and strong and stalwart as they look. For the rest, they have always been law-abiding subjects of the King-Emperor, and in your presence I order them to remain so in the future as well. That is all that I had to say, and I would request you to tell the Government what I have told you."

After this I was about to retire to my room, but my sons detained me and translated for me the undertaking that the Government required from them and the answer that they were about to hand over to Mr. Abdul Majid for transmission by wire to Sir Charles Cleveland. I have already given the undertaking required and now proceeed to give the statement communicated to Government in reply. It ran as follows:—

B-ism-i-llah-i-r-Rahman-i-r-Rahim.

"We have always been God-fearing Muslims who accept above all else the commandments of God as conveyed to us in the Holy Quran and the life and sayings of our Prophet. Without prejudice to this faith we have always been law-abiding lovers of our country, opposed to all unconstitutional and violent methods, and, war or no war, this we always desire and hope to remain. Therefore we have no objection to give an assurance, if any is still needed, to the effect that without prejudice to our allegiance to Islam we shall abstain from doing, writing, or saying anything intended or reasonably likely to encourage or assist the enemies of the King-Emperor, and from doing, writing, or saying anything intended or reasonably likely to be construed as an attack upon the allies and friends of the King-Emperor, and that we shall also sbstain from any violent or unconstitutional agitation likely to affect the public safety. We understand, and base the above undertaking on the clear understanding that the abstentions promised above are not intended to restrict in the slightest measure our freedom to observe all our religious duties as Mussalmans or to cause us to refrain from participation in politics within constitutional limits."

This statement of my sons' position entirely satisfied me, and I think it should satisfy anybody.

Some time after that we casually learnt that the Hon'ble the Raja Saheb of Mahmudabad was coming down from Simla to visit my sons, and that Government had placed the Circuit House here at his disposal. We were naturally under the impression that the Raja Saheb would previously intimate to us the time of his expected arrival; but, as it happened, he suddenly arrived on the night of the 9th September by motor car from Jubbulpore after a rough journey in pouring rain. It appeared that Government did not intend people to know that the Raja Saheb was proceeding to Chhindwara to discuss with my sons the question of their release, but, as in the case of Mrs. Besant, Government required to be satisfied that if restored to liberty they would not resort to unconstitutional and violent methods of political agitation, and the Raja Saheb and the Hon'ble Mr. Jinnah were desirous of giving such an assurance. The Raja Saheb conversed with my sons, and being very soon satisfied that they were as patriotic as they were God-fearing, he wired to Mr. Jinnah the next morning that he was thoroughly satisfied.

He was under the impression that Mrs. Besant and her two lieutenants and my sons, and probably all other detenus also were to be released on the 12th September, and was therefore anxious to reach Simla by that date. Accordingly he started on the return journey on the morning of the 10th September; but he had hardly gone 8 or 9 miles when his car broke down, and he had to return to Chhindwara on a hot noon by a country cart procured with considerable difficulty. When he had kindly come that morning to see me I had apologised to him for the poorness of the hospitality that under the circumstances we could show to him. I did not then know that he was to experience all this discomfort also, and our thanks to him for the efforts made to secure the release of my sons, which would have been great in any case, are on that account all the greater. He finally returned by Special Train on the night of the 10th September , and I understand that a couple of days later Mr. Abdul Majid, who had been staying here since the 7th, awaiting Government orders, was recalled to Simla.

In this connection I may perhaps mention that it was only after his arrival here that the Raja Saheb came to know that an emissary of the C.I.D. had preceded him and had already made an offer to my

sons. At this he showed considerable surprise and also a little annoyance.

After the Raja Saheb's departure nothing was heard for a time. But from the 13th September telegrams have been pouring in upon us expressing joy at my sons' release or anxiously asking for a confirmation of the general belief that it had already been ordered. As no orders were received from Government, nor any authentic news from Simla, I caused telegrams to be sent to the Hon'ble the Raja Saheb of Mahmudabad and the Hon'ble Mr. Mazharul-Haque, and the following replies were received on the 21st of September:—

> "Mohamed's reply to his friend's note has hampered progress. Trying hard."

MAHMUDABAD

> "No orders yet issued. Have patience."

MAZHAR-UL-HAQUE

Well, after 28 months of internment few could reproach us with impatience, and much as our early return home is necessitated by the affairs of my sons and the health of one of the children who has had since last May three successive attacks of fever of a most malignant type in spite of the best medical treatment and the most careful nursing, and for whom the Civil Surgeon insists now on an immediate change, we have called patience once more to our aid, and await God's pleasure, as all Muslims must do. Nevertheless, I thought it my duty to send the following telegram to both these kind friends of my sons:—

> "Your telegram. Kindly wire me further developments daily. I order my sons strictly conform Islam."

ABADI BANO

This is a full statement of the facts, and I trust it would enlighten our friends and relations from whom anxious enquiries are now being received in as large numbers as their congratulations only a few days ago. As I have said before, when my sons are in a position to do so they would no doubt thank all those kind friends whose sympathy has been of so great comfort to them during their undeserved internment, and I need hardly say that I shall add my grateful acknowledgments to theirs. But I should like to express in some measure even now my gratitude to Mr. Ghate, our legal adviser here, and the Secretary of our Home Rule League, who has rendered to me ever so readily and whold-heartedly every assistance of which I stood in need.

(Sd.) ABADI BANO

Source :
Muslim Internees Series No. 1.

33

LETTER FROM THE MOTHER OF MOHAMED ALI TO MRS. ANNE BESANT

(Unpublished)

In the name of God, the most Merciful and the Most Compassionate

Chhindwara, (C. P.)
December 11th, 1917.

My Dear Sister,

Although I have not heard from you recently, I feel nevertheless that I owe you a letter in reply to the communication that you sent to the Press about a month ago after your interview with His Excellency the Viceroy about the release of my sons.

I would have written to you earlier; but for sometime I was none too well myself, and then Mohamed Ali and Shaukat Ali and one of my grand children got ill, and our legal adviser, Mr. Ghate, who very kindly assists me in my correspondence, was not available owing to some local political work on which he was engaged.

I thought this explanation necessary so that my silence might not lend itself to any misconstruction at a time when it seems that your position and the real nature of your advice to the people after the interview with Viceroy have in some quarters been regrettably misunderstood.

I now write to express—and that not as a matter of convention—my very deep feelings of gratefulness to, and my warm appreciation of the arduous labour involved in your two long journeys undertaken at your time of life and in your present state of health to secure the

release of my sons. I am sorry that your efforts did not meet with greater success; but that does not affect our indebtedness to you, nor does it alter our firm belief in ultimate victory.

So far as I and my sons are concerned we have long ere this completely surrendered ourselves to Allah, and entrusted ourselves to His Divine care. We are, therefore, sustained by a great hope that no disappointment can dispel, and despair, since it can arise only out of the unbelief, is to us unthinkable. Resigned as we are to God's will, it matters little to us what assistance we receive from friends and fellow-workers, and it affects the situation very little whether their efforts bear fruit early or late. But that is not to say that we are not deeply sensible of their sympathy and are not interested in the effectiveness or otherwise of the steps that they may propose to take for the release of the interned.

Obviously I have not had the same opportunity as you have had of understanding from the official point of view the real obstacle in the way of my sons' release; and I feel sure that you will excuse me if I cannot share your views in their entirety, specially when you consider the fact that as one so closely associated with my sons I have had greater opportunities than others of knowing things from their side of the matter. I should indeed very much like to believe with you that the Viceroy and his Council gladly release my sons if the war were not at its present critical stage. But for reasons which Mr. Ghate tells me he is going to explain in a letter of his own I am unable to agree with this view. And it does seem difficult to reconcile this benevolent disposition of the Government with its refusal to permit my sons to have an interview with the Secretary of State and his companions and the Viceroy even on the subject of constitutional reforms and its insistence that Mohamed Ali should not be even one of a number of representatives of India that waited on them on behalf of the Indian National Congress and the All India Moslem League. You say :—

"The intense though passive sympathy with Turkey shown by Mr. Mohamed Ali seems from the Government standpoint, I think, to contain a possible menace lest it should pass into active sympathy."

Before your interview with the Viceroy it had not been made clear with which enemy of the King, my sons had freely expressed and promoted sympathy; but since it is now clear that it is not the

Germans, Austrians, or Bulgars, but only the Turks with whom my sons are alleged to have been guilty of sympathising, I should like to make sure whether Government really understands the position of us Mussalmans. To me it seems that our position has been entirely misunderstood.

Now my sons have no particular sympathy with Turkey any more than they have with China; but along with everyone of us who believes in the Holy Quran they have been clearly, emphatically and repeatedly enjoined to regard all Mussalmans as brothers and to show kindliness and compassion to them, and none could pretend to be a good Mussalman who did not as freely express and promote sympathy with the Mussalmans of Turkey as with those of India or Persia or Arabia. The last six or seven years have been years of sorrow and suffering for Mussalmans all the world over, and I am proud to think that whenever and wherever Mussalmans were found to be suffering, my sons felt for them and grieved with them. The Mussalmans of Persia, Morocco, and Tripoli claimed their sympathy no less than the Musslamans of Turkey proper, and all received it in equal measure, for all were equally Moslem and according to the Holy Quran equally entitled to it. And it must not be forgotten that the sympathy so freely expressed and promoted with the sufferers in the Tripolian and Balkan Wars had not only been countenanced and approved but openly encouraged and promoted by the late Viceroy and all the important officers of Government. It was freely expressed and promoted by my sons not because of any political predilections, but as part of their faith, and nothing has happened since to make the performance of that religious duty to-day a crime and an offence.

There is, however, one other aspect of the question which must be clearly understood. While all Mussalmans, wheresoever they may have their domicile are equally entitled to the sympathy of their brethren in faith, His Majesty the Sultan of Turkey has a unique position of his own. As the temporal sovereign of a part of God's earth he rules over Turkey just as His Majesty the Shah rules over Persia and His Majesty the Amir rules over Afghanistan. But quite distinct from this temporal sovereignty he enjoys, what the other temporal sovereigns do not, the power and dignity and status attaching to the Caliphate. He is the "*Khalifat-ul-Rasul*" or successor of our Holy Prophet (on whom be God's *benedictions* and peace) and as such "Amir-ul-Momin" or the Chief of Faithful. I am glad

to note that our government at least realises that this religious question is entirely outside the competence of non-Moslems, but of what practical use is this recognition if the best of Indian Mussalmans are deprived of their liberty for no other crime than that of freely expressing and promoting sympathy, even though it is acknowledged to be merely "passive"—whatever that may mean—with the spiritual Head of the Islamic world and with his Moslem subjects?

I would once more emphasize that sympathy with the Moslems of Turkey and spiritual allegiance to their ruler is not a political creed that each of us is free to hold or to discard without prejudice to his salvation hereafter and which those who retain may have in varying degrees to suit their whims and fancies. It is a religious doctrine which is the essence of our faith and the limits of it are as rigidly laid down as the limits of any other religious doctrine. I am no theologian, nor are my sons; and in this as in other matters of faith, we seek guidance from those that are. But this much, must surely be known to all Mussalmans as it is known to us, that the limits of such sympathy as we are enjoined to show towards our brethren in faith must be uniform and unvarying. It is a novel doctrine that my sons have improvised to embarrass at the Government after its declaration of war against Turkey, or is it part of the faith that was left to us as a complete and unchanging whole thirteen hundred years ago ? It is this questions that the Government must dispassionately consider today instead of relying upon the reports of ignorant and untrustworthy persons. But this is just the question which seems never to have been considered, or if considerd, Government seems unwilling to abide by the implications of the only decision at which it could rightly have arrived. It is at least admitted that my sons' expression and promotion of sympathy with the King's enemies has been open and free. And since it has not been stated how and when this sympathy has been freely expressed and promoted it seems more than probable that Government has once more misconstrued the prayers which all Mussalmans have been offering for the success of the Caliph and Moslem arms for centuries before the present war, and which for a time the Chief Commissioner for these Provinces desired to prevent Shaukat Ali from offering. A clear statement of the religious position was, however, furnished to him and the orders against this religious observance were withdrawn immediately afterwards. If the expression of my

sons' sympathy has taken any other form, why has it not been openly stated ?

Whatever sympathy we feel for the Mussalmans in Turkey, and whatever allegiance we owe to the Spiritual Head of the Islamic world, is part and parcel of our unchanging faith, and cannot, therefore, suffer any alteration. Consequently the distinction that is sought to be made between "active" and "passive" sympathy is to us Mussalmans wholly unintelligible. And as for intensity of feelings surely it is responable to suppose that the sufferings of our brethren should excite greater sympathy towards them than their security or success, and I cannot see how the "debacle" of Russia, even if it has encouraged the Germans and the Turks, as you say, can affect the sympathies of my sons and their title to the fullest freedom under the law.

Government is, of course, free to make offers of release to my sons and retract them after they have complied with the conditions attaching to them while safeguarding their faith. It might have had some hope of securing thereby a material alternation in their attitude if that attitude had been the outcome merely of a passing political fancy. But suffering such as to my knowledge has been theirs during the last 2½ years, which may well have cured one of a political folly, has only served to strengthen them in their resolve to do nothing to prejudice their ultimate salvation. They could not alter their attitude in this matter in the slightest degree without being untrue to all that they hold most sacred and dear, and believe me if ever they did that I would wish they had never been born. And remember that it is a mother that says this.

My dear sister, I have laboured this point perhaps with wearisome insistence; but that is only because so far I regret to have to say. I have come across nothing in the public Press - and I am, I assure you, a very close student of it, just now, getting many Urdu papers read out to me every day with a degree of regularity in spite of the devotional exercises and household duties that leave me very little leisure, and often getting the gist of the writings in the English papers explained to me - I say I have so far come across nothing in the public Press to convince me that your non-Moslem Government has grasped the essence and truth of our religious position. And I say this more in sorrow than in anger. Our loyalty to an earthly sovereign, be he Moslem, Christian, or Hindu, is strictly conditional

on our being given the fullest religious freedom, and as God-fearing Mussalmans we cannot accept the orders of any secular authority if they conflict with the commandments of the Ruler of Rulers. Allegiance to Him takes precedence of all other kinds of allegiance, whether it be allegiance due to king or country, father or mother, brother or friend, and it seems to me that kings and governments would have but a broken reed to lean upon if they trusted the loyalty of a Mussalman who placed it before his loyalty to God. I do not pretend to think that the needs of temporal authority may not sometimes make it difficult and embarassing for it to tolerate the worshippers' allegiance to their Maker as ranking about the subjects' allegiance to their sovereign, and the history of every religion is full of such instances. But it is just because it may become difficult at times to tolerate this that secular sovereigns should always consider it their duty to acquaint themselves with the innermost religious convictions of their subjects and shaped their course in the light of that knowledge, avoiding most scrupulously every situation in which their subjects' spiritual allegiance may tend to draw them in a direction contrary to their temporal allegiance. Every Government must realise the gravity of the issue when a choice is forced upon the people between their allegiance to God and their allegiance to a man, or a number of men, however exalted. However, others may choose, a Mussalman could choose only in one way. Much may and should be done for king and country; but no one is entitled to demand from another the surrender of his soul.

It cannot be said that my sons had ever made a secret of their religious beliefs, nor can it be said that in these they differ from other Mussalmans in India who are now openly declaring that they share the religious convictions of my sons and deserve internment no less if also no more. Four years before their internment they had repeatedly explained to Government the implications of their faith and cannot now be blamed for springing a surprise upon the Government. My dear sister, it is a poor sort of statesmanship first to ignore the most sacred convictions of the people and then to punish them for having such convictions; and the internment of a few Mussalmans, even if they be their most beloved religious and political leaders, is poor enough as a punishment if it is intended thereby to turn back seventy million Mussalmans from the path of their religious duty. For does not each and every one of them hold the faith of their glorious Prophet that "Verily my prayer and my

worship and my life and my death are for Allah the Lord of the worlds. He has no associate; and that have I been commanded, and I am the foremost among those that obey". With such a faith can internment of prison or even death have any terrors for a Mussalman that truly believes ?

I have already written at great length, but I cannot close this letter without expressing my opinion about your proposal to take my sons' case to the High Court. I am afraid I know nothing of law and have had no experience of it to guide me. But my sons have had some experience of it, and I have among their friends and in our legal adviser, Mr. Ghate, those who both know it and have gained considerable experience of the manner in which it works. They tell me that the merits of my sons' case will not be permitted to be discussed in any court, and the reference to the High Court will have to be confined to the legality of the Defence of India Act itself which the Viceroy's Council had passed. I would have welcomed an open trial in a properly constituted court of impartial judges. Although I know what fearful effect the excitement of such a trial would have on the already shattered health of Mohamed Ali. But at best law is only the rich man's game, and it may ruin the richest of us when his adversary's expenses are paid from the public exchequer. You have with your characteristic thoughtfulness and generosity opened a fund for legal expenses and have contributed to it from your own purse also. But I frankly ask you, is it worth it ? Do you think our rulers would leave the matter there even if we secured a decision against them. Even if we came to share your belief that the Viceroy and his Council would gladly release my sons if the war were not at its present critical stage, is it conceivable that, holding as they do such views about the war and the effect of my sons' release on its fortunes, they would quietly see them released merely because a High Court held that they themselves had no power to deprive them of their liberty ? And would they let such a tremendous power so easily slip from their hands and see everyone of the thousand odd Indians now rotting in confinement regain their liberty? Would not the British Parliament be asked to validate the Defence of India Act or itself pass another of the same kind for India ?

This is, however, for you and those who know these things at first hand to think about and decide. But to my mind what is of far greater urgency is the collection of funds for another purpose,

namely, the relief of the interned and their dependents who are suffering so terribly from the worst effects of this hateful law. Day after day, one hears heart-rending tales of the pain and suffering of the interned, whom Government had taken care to deprive of their liberty, including the power to earn a livelihood for themselves and their families, but whom it had apparently forgotten to provide with any subsistence allowance or, at least, an allowance adequate for their needs. Even cases of suicide in such circumstances have been reported. I repeat what I wrote to our dear brother Sir Subramanya Iyer. Can nothing be done to provide money for these unfortunate men, and their still more unfortunate relatives whose innocence at least could never have been in question? I can judge from our own experience of the last 2½ years with entirely inadequate allowance to live upon, how great must be the constant strain of want in the case of those who are not so fortunate as ourselves, for we at least possessed some property that could be disposed off in case of urgent need, and have besides a large number of friends to relieve every want the moment they came to know of it. Apart from financial relief, there is a word of encouragement in the thought that, although you are alone in your exile, your fellow-country-men who are still free and blessed with comforts and even luxuries are not indifferent to your fate. My heart goes out not only to the score of Mussalmans, mostly religious leaders or students of our sacred books, the sufferings of whose dependents are from time to time chronicled in the Urdu Press, but also to the hundreds of Bengali youths who have been interned in all sorts of places, and some of whom, confined in solitary cells, have now resolved upon a perpetual fast. Is it not a blot on our partriotism that even after nearly 3 years of the rigorous working of a hateful Act we have no organisation that maintains a record of all interned persons, of the places where they are interned, of the directions in which their liberties have been restricted, of the additional restrictions imposed, for the most part without any reason being assigned, of the subsistence allowances fixed for them, of the families, they have to maintain thereon, and of the additional assistance they need to keep up any thing like the standard of living to which they were used before their internments, but which is, so far as we can judge, habitually ignored by Government in fixing their subsistence allowances. The maintenance of such a record, the collection of funds for the relief of the interned and their families, including the proper education of their children, the provision of such legal assistance as they may need to make any representations to

Government, and generally keeping in touch with them with a view to cheer them up in the abnormally depressing conditions of internment and exile, and to save them from the abuse of authority by local officials who are sometimes even more incensed against them than the Government that interned them and are constantly desirous of imposing further restrictions by means of executive interpretation and secret official pressure on the people of the locality-these seem to me most urgently called for, and I cannot think that there are any insurmountable difficulties in the way of creating and maintaining such an organisation. Along with this we may, of course, take such steps as we think proper to secure the release of the interned, whether by appealing to the law courts or to the Executive itself, or to the British Parliament and public, or by appealing to our own people to share the sufferings of the interned in their hundreds of thousands. As I have said, my sons are luckily able to get such assistance as they need; but others are not equally fortunate, and it is particularly to them that we should extend a helping hand. They have not figured prominently in public life, and while we agitate for the few public men that have suffered for their public activities, these men, unknown to fame, are apt to be forgotten, although perhaps their sufferings are even greater, and no less undeserved.

There is one more matter to which I should like to make, if only a passing reference. It is to the harrowing incidents connected with the last E'd sacrifices that took place in the districts of Shahabad, Gaya, and Patna. They have naturally made a very deep impression on the Mussalmans of India, deeper in fact than is, I fear, generally realised. I, however, feel sure that you grieve no less than I do over the terrible sufferings of Mussalmans, men and women, and the insults offered to our faith. While I feel all this very keenly, as I must do, in one way I am glad that these incidents occurred when they did. They have shown but too unmistakably how much we have still to do to root out the religious prejudices that have so long retarded the progress of the country and have provided our adversaries with an excuse for denying to us mastership in our own house. We must not be content with what we have accomplished, but work on with a will to make the recurrence of similar incidents impossible, specially when, unlike the present times, we are at last solely responsible for the prevention of such disorder. While relieved to find that in the midst of mutual recrimination our people are not neglecting the most pressing need of the moment, namely the relief of scores of

thousands who have neither money nor food, nor sufficient clothing, nor even a home to call their own, I wish more could be done in this direction.

One thing, however, fills me with pride, for I rejoice to note that even such harrowing incidents have not been permitted by my co-religionists to impair their faith in the ultimate unity of Indian interests or to weaken their determination to achieve without further delay a position and status for India among the nations of the world that have long been her due. Howsoever interested partisans, pretending to speak in India's name and for her dumb millions, may try to hide the truth from the Secretary of State, whom we welcome in our midst, and howsoever much they may endeavour to screen the reality by choosing for him whom he may see and whom he may not, surely he cannot fail to realise the intensity of patriotic feeling that has, in spite of such sudden provocation, kept the best elements among the Mussalmans firmly in the path that they had chalked out for their community after much anxious care and deliberation. The manner in which they have with stood the shock of these exceedingly disturbing events illustrates better than all else what they feel for their country as a whole without ceasing to feel for their own community. That is why I say I am in one way glad that these incidents, terrible though they were, happened when they did. They are not the first fruits or even a foretaste of Home Rule, but the concomitants of the existing absence of popular responsibility, and I pray and hope that the wise determination of the Mussalmans to pursue their ideals undisturbed by these events may soon be rewarded with the attainment of that complete freedom and plenitude of responsibility for the well-being and progress of their country which constitute the best guarantee of peace and order and perfect toleration.

I now take leave of you, dear sister, and wish you every success in guiding the nation in its deliberations at Calcutta.

I shall only add that this letter has been written with the assistance of Mr. Ghate. He has been in intimate touch with us for more than two years now, and has full knowledge of our affairs. I am constrained to explain this as a communication that I sent to the Press last September has been incorrectly considered by Government to have been composed by my sons, and they have been threatened with the imposition of additional restrictions if they repeated an offence that they had never committed. Had they been free I would

naturally have availed myself of their assistance; but since they are not I have turned more than once to Mr. Ghate, as you know. All the same, it amuses me a little to think how fearfully incompetent we poor *purdanashin* women are believed to be. It is true that women of my age did not go to schools and colleges; but then education has not always been imparted in such institutions, nor is all education confined to them even to-day. There are within my knowledge many women who, like myself, have had to shoulder through their widow, hood very early in life the burdens that properly belonged to men, and yet not a few of them discharged their novel duties with great credit to themselves and advantage to their children. I do not understand what there was in my simple statement of last September that placed its composition outside the competence of a distinguished University graduate and practising lawyer like Mr. Ghat to whom I took great pains to explain all that I wanted to be stated, also finally making sure that it was done. It is perhaps forgotten that it was their poor *purdanashin* mother that had the sole guidance and supervision of her sons' education when fate left them to her as helpless little mites, that even to-day she is the mistress in the house, and that in all their more important undertakings at least they never act before consulting her.

Well, if they are destined to suffer still more because their mother who shares their enforced exile has not voluntarily cut herself off altogether from the world outside Chhindwara, neither they nor I could help it, though it would be some consolation to them to think that, whereas previously new restrictions had been imposed without any attempt at justification or any reason being assigned, and all their own caution and care had not been able to protect them, against such exercise of authority, this time they had suffered vicariously for their poor old mother, and know the offence for which they were punished. Whether their sufferings are on account of their faith, as Government is clearly giving us to understand, or on account of their country, in serving which they incurred the displeasure and risked the malice of those who monopolise power and in whose hands mainly lies the decision whether they should be released or remain interned, I pray, and also ask you to pray, that God would grant them the strength to endure to the end, and whether the end be near or remote, I fully believe that "Victory belongs to Right, Justice, and Truth." We await it with confidence, and in the meantime seek

assistance as we Mussalmans are asked to seek it, in patience and prayer.

With affectionate regards,
Your Sister,
(Sd.) ABADI BANO ABDUL ALI BEGAM.

Source :

Mohamed Ali Papers
Roll 4, Nehru Museum

34

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO GANDHIJI

(Unpublished)

B-ism-i-llah-i-r-Rahman-i-r-Raheem

Chhindwara
C.P.
February, 20 1918.

My dear Mr. Gandhi,

I am a poor correspondent at best, but when the censorship came to canfine my correspondence to merely private and domestic affairs I lost all zest in writing even to my most intimate friends. The weather is not in India the perenial topic of interest as it is in England, except during the rains, and then at times it becomes too tragic a subject for writing about lightly when to more than two hundred millions of our fellow-countrymen "life is a long drawn question between a crop and a crop." The only other topic that I can dilate upon is my health, and that too is by now as exhausted as I am myself. I have too long treated it lightly, and pretended an optimism about it that I was in fact too far from feeling, till at last I have come to acknowledge that my vitality is much reduced, and in spite of almost the caution of a hypochondriac about colds and fever, I get both for too often now to ignore altogether. But whatever else my internment may or may not have done, it has I believe set the soul free, and that compensates me for so many items on the wrong side of the account. What I could but dimly perceive before I now realise with distinctness, and it is this, that the whole aim and end of life is to serve God and obey His commandments and permit none else to share His Kingdom with Him. This seems to be too simple and commonplace an idea to have escaped one who had some pretensions to consider himself educated and cultured : and yet I confess I had never before grasped this truth in all its fullness, not regarded

it as the governing idea of all life and its manifold activities. Internment made us seek refuge in the Holy Quran, and for the first time, I have to confess it, I read it through and with new eyes. It was then that this truth dawned upon me and gave me a coherence and a unity to a thousand vague aspirations to do good to my people, my country and to men and women in general. And, of course regimen (sic) of the soul found a new significance, and I understand, for the first time in all its clearness, what you repeat a hundred times daily, and what our Moslem mothers also taught us to repeat when tempted by Satan. "I fear none but God. There is neither dread nor power but in God."

I understand that although you think you have rightly understood the significance of the addition we had made in the form of undertaking required from us by Government last September, you want to make sure that it is so well, I can assure you that you have interpreted in rightly, as the foregoing account of my "conversation" would itself suggest. I regard nothing as binding upon me that is against the commandments of God as conveyed in the Holy Quran and the words and acts of the Holy Prophet, on whom be God's benedictions and peace, and I declare for myself and my brother that you are at liberty to state publicly, if need be, that both of us, nevertheless believe in the British connection, and consider ourselves perfectly loyal citizens of the Empire. The so-called reservation made by me in the understanding required by Government in particular meant that we should resist by every means at our disposal any encroachments upon the Holy Places and any interference in the question of the Caliphate and the spiritual position of the Caliph. But in this we are not taking a singular, or new and unheard of position with the malicious view of embarrassing the Government. All Mussalmans believe alike on these subjects, and we feel sure that there is not a single Mussalman in India that cares for his salvation hereafter who would not rise against any such encroachment and any such interference in our most intimate religious beliefs and practices.

There never was any possibility of misunderstanding about this in the course of any one acquainted with universally held Muslim beliefs and universally practised Muslim observances; but if ever there was any such possibility; there cannot be any after this most explicit declaration of our religious and political beliefs.

I wish you had applied again for permission to see us when we could have exchanged ideas with still greater case; and although I have given you an explicit enough assurance for both of us, we still very much wish that you could come. Do apply for permission and come. Surely they cannot reasonably refuse permission to one like yourself.

Affectionate esteem from both of us and *dua* from mother. You make us jealous of her affection for you.

Your very sincerely,
Mohamed Ali.

Source :
Mohamed Ali Papers
MOH/L-3467

35

LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI TO MR F.S.A. SLOCOCK, CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER, CENTRAL PROVINCES.

(*Unpublished*)

Allah-u-Akbar

Chhindwara,
August 18, 1918.

Dear Mr. Slocock,

I am afraid I have to trouble you once again over a very urgent affair. There is nothing new about it; but its urgency to ourselves cannot be doubted.

Even since our internment in May, 1915, to save our business from utter ruin, we have been applying for permission to be allowed to live in Rampur from September to the end of February or March following, whenever the Cotton Season approached. For reasons which we have never been able to discover so far, this reasonable request has been refused. Past experience does not give us much encouragement that our request would meet with any better fate this year; nevertheless, we seem it our duty to put our case before the Govt. of India once more.

Owing to our absence during the last three Cotton Seasons our Factory had to remain silent, and we had to incur liabilities during this period for about fifty thousand rupees on account, mainly, of interest on borrowed capital invested in the undertaking. In spite of our repeated representations, the Government has so far refused to pay even these out-of-pocket expenses, let alone the reasonablea and legitimate profits which we were sure to make, over and above that

sum. If this year also we are not allowed to work the Factory at Rampur, we shall be burdened with the additional liability for Rs. 15,000, which, I fear, it is entirely beyond our resources to meet under the circumstances to which more than 3 years of internment have reduced us.

I do not wish to discuss here the ethics of our internment, which, as you know, we honestly feel we do not deserve. Whether Government can honourably release us or not is a question that it has to decide as it thinks best. But I take the liberty to say that there should be no hesitation in acceding to our request for transfer to Rampur for the Cotten Season so that we could do what little still remains to us to save ourselves from complete financial ruin.

I think you can easily judge for yourself that it is no easy task to build up a ruined business, and our mere going to Rampur and living there would not help us much. In fact our difficulties would just begin when we reach there. We shall have to exert ourselves to our utmost and give all our time and undivided attention and energy to our business to save it from the utter ruin that only too clearly threatens it.

I earnestly hope we shall have the support and recommendation of the Local Administration in this matter as it is fully cognisant of all the circumstances. Both Mr. Corbett and our present Consor have had occasion to learn that I made every effort within the power of one interned so far away to lease the Factory, and there was at one time almost a certainty of success. But owing to our absence the negotiations fell through, and I have only a couple of days ago learnt the result by wire from the prospective lesees copy of which I enclose. It is also within your knowledge that I have a civil suit pending against me at Rampur for Rs. 13,000, which will shortly come up for judgment, and if we are not enabled to work the Factory this year also, another suit for a lakh of rupees is almost certain to be filed in January next.

If the Government would kindly consider our request I may mention that we would like to proceed to Rampur as early as possible so that the machinery could be cleaned up and repaired in time for the work that would be commenced by the middle of October. It would require about 6 weeks to clean up and repair the machinery and buildings damaged in the recent earthquake.

As regards the conditions considered necessary to be attached our stay in Rampur, we are perfectly willing to abide by an restrictions that we may reasonably be required to do, keeping, course, in view the requirements of our business also. These could b settled between Government and His Highness the Nawab of Rampu

An early reply would oblige me greatly.

Yours very trul
Sd/- Shaukat A

The Hon. Mr. F.S.A. Slocock,
Chief Secretary to the Hon. the Chief Commissioner
Central Provinces.

Source :
Home Department, September 1918.

36

LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI TO S.R. PANDIT

(Unpublished)

Bism-i-llah-i-r-Rehman-i-r-Rahim

Chhindwara
23 Sept. 1918

Dear Mr. Pandit,

Thanks for your letter of today—notifying that our representation should reach the Committee at Allahabad by October 1 if possible.

It does not, however, appear that the Government of India were in possession of our representation dated 18th instant addressed to you when this date was fixed. All that we can say at present is that the time is insufficient even if we had all the particulars for which we then applied to you. But what is of far greater importance is that we should have a copy of the charges against us and of the evidence in support thereof. Without further delay. Will you therefore kindly wire Government requesting them to furnish us with all the particulars for which we have applied through you on the as soon as possible and give us sufficient time thereafter to prepare our defence in consultation with our friends and legal advisers and at the same time take into consideration our respectful protest regarding the personnel of the Committee and our apprehensions lest the procedure to be adopted by the Committee and any special rules of evidence be such as to give no reasonable certainty of substantial justice in the end. As you can readily see for yourself, time is now an essential consideration to the Government, and a telegram must be sent to them requesting for early reply to our inquiries and an

equally early decision regarding our protest and apprehension a
submitted in our letter of 18th instant addressed to you.

Sincerely yours

Shaukat A

S.R. Pandit Esq.
Officiating Deputy Commissioner,
Chhindwara

Source :
Shaukat Ali Papers

37

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO S.R. PANDIT

(*Unpublished*)

Chhindwara
25.9.1918

Dear Mr. Pandit,

To expedite matters and avoid needless delay I give you the names of two of our friends whom we want at once and this is in accordance with the desire of the Hon. Chief Commissioner as communicated to us just now by Mr. Manzoor Ahmed.

Hon. Riza Ali of Allahabad,[1] Mr. Shoeb Kureshy, M.A., LL.B. of Delhi,[2] I think, would be most handy and useful just now and

1. Sir Syed Raza Ali (1882-) was educated at Aligarh and practised Law at Moradabad but soon shifted to High Court, Allahabad. He took active part in almost all activities of the Young Muslim Party. He was a leader of the Khilafat movement in Allahabad and was also a member of the All-India Muslim League from 1912-25. He was elected to the U.P. Legislative Council, 1921-6 and led Muslim delegations to the Viceroy over Turkey in 1922 and 1923. He was President of the All-India Muslim League in 1924 and also acted as agent of the Government of India in South Africa. He was knighted.
2. Shuab Qureshi was educated at Aligarh from where he took his B.A., LL.B. He took part in Red Crescent Mission, 1912-13 and turned to journalism. He succeeded Raja Ghulam Husain as editor of the *New Era* in 1917. He was a member of the Council of the All-India Muslim League. He joined Cambridge for studies, left studies to join the Khilafat movement. He edited the *Young India* and the *Independent and* was prosecuted for writing seditious articles in the papers.

when we are drafting our representation I do hope both of them would be free and available otherwise I will have to write to you again. It was for this reason that I had given you ten names yesterday. However, I do hope they would come all right. In the meantime we are drafting under the peculiar circumstances placed in.

I do hope the orders of the Government of India would soon be received re (garding) our letter of the Ist Sept.

I remain
Your sincerely
Mohamed Ali

Source :
Shaukat Ali Papers

38

LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI AND MOHAMED ALI TO S.R. PANDIT

(*Unpublished*)

Chhindwara
29.9.1918

Dear Mr. Pandit,

We want permission to receive visits from the following of our friends, legal and otherwise and to consult them about our representation to the committees enquiring into our case.

1. Mr. M.K. Gandhi who takes a great interest in our case and has been our best of friends.
2. Hon. Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haq Bar-at-Law, Bankipur.
3. Hon. Mr. Syed Riza Ali, B.A , LL.B. Vakil, Allahabad.
4. Mr. Zahoor Ahmad, Bar-at-Law, Allahabad.[1]
5. Mr. Khaliquzzaman, B.A., LL.B. Vakil, Lucknow.[2]

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1. Sheikh Zahoor Ahmad belonged to a family of Zamidars of Mau Aimma in U.P. He graduated from Aligarh and was called to the Bar and practised at the Allahabad High Court. He was a founder member of the All-India Muslim League and became the joint-secretary of the League in 1908. He actively participated in almost all the activities of the radicals.
2. Khaliquzzaman (1889-) completed his education in Law at Aligarh and practised at Lucknow. He took part in politics from his student life. He was one of the member of the Medical Mission to Turkey in 1912. He was a member of the Congress but later joined the All-India Muslim League and League's revival in U.P. is due to his activities. After partition he migrated to Pakistan and served as ambassador and governor there. He passed away in Pakistan.

6. Mr. Moazam Ali, B.A. (Oxon), Bar-at-Law, Moradabad.
7. Mr. A.R. Siddique, M.A., LL.B., Vakil, Lucknow.
8. Mr. A.M. Khowaja, B.A. (Cantab), Bar-at-Law, Aligarh.[3]
9. T.A.K. Sherwani, B.A. (Cantab), Bar-at-Law, Aligarh.[4]
10. Mr. Shoeb Kureshy, M.A., LL.B., Delhi.

We cannot expect all to come and that is why we have given a few names here. Kindly hurry up the matter and oblige.

P.S. Just received Mr. Manzoor Ahmad's note telling us that all letters to our friends about this case would first be sent to the Chief Secretary. At present we have no desire nor time to discuss our case with friends in long when permission is received for their visits. I hope that our letters asking them to come to our help would not be submitted to the Chief Secretary, that would cause needless delay, which we wish to avoid.

Yours sincerely
Shaukat Ali
Mohamed Ali

Source :
Shaukat Ali Papers

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3. Khwaja Abdul Majid (1885-1962) was educated at Aligarh and Cambridge and was called to the Bar. At Cambridge he was a contemporary of Jawaharlal Nehru. In 1920 when the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i Hind was in the making he associated himself with this body and took active part in the Khilafat movement. He served the Jamia Millia and rendered meritorious services to the cause of Indian Independence.
4. T.A.K. Sherwani, (1885-1935) graduated from M.A.O. College, Aligarh and acted as Secretary to the Students Union of the College. He joined Lincoln's Inn in 1909 where he met Dr. Syed Mahmud, A.M. Khwaja and Jawaharlal. They returned as Barristers in 1912. Since his arrival to India he entered in the national movement and served the country to get independence.

39

LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI AND MOHAMED ALI TO S.R. PANDIT

(Unpublished)

Bis-m-illah-i-r-Rahman-i-r-Rahim

Chhindwara
30th September 1918

Dear Mr. Pandit,

With reference to your letter of the 28th inst. communicating to us the reply of the Government of India to our representation of the 18th, we would like to know what has been decided regarding our humble submission with reference to the inclusion of Mr. Abdur Rauf in the Committee appointed to examine our case.

Since no 'formal trial' is said to be intended, could the Government kindly let us know what exactly is intended and that result is intended to be achieved, so that the preparation of our defence may be facilitated ? We need hardly say that we have every desire to take the fullest advantage of the opportunity which has at last been offered to us to present our case.

As regards the statement of charges which we are promised, we trust it would contain a clear description of the acts complained of and particulars as to time and place, without which we need hardly point out it will be difficult to deal relevantly with the charges and meet them.

We also trust that the Committee would invite us to appear before them to facilitate our defence.

With reference to the refusal to permit us to receive a visit from Mr. Gandhi whose assistance and counsel we particularly need at this juncture, we submit that this is neither fair to us nor to that

noble friend of India and of Government and is wholly unintelligible to us. Government is fully aware of the keen interest he has been taking in our case for a long time past and we understand that he has been frequently in communication with the Government on the subject of our release. Few persons in India command our confidence to the same extent as the Mahatma, and naturally when his efforts to induce Government to terminate our undeserved internment resulted in the appointment of a Committee to examine our case we applied immediately for permission to receive a visit from him to enable us to take the fullest possible advantage of an opportunity to present our case offered to us after three and half years of incarceration in consultation with our trusted friend and adviser. We regard the refusal to receive a visit from one whose name we had deliberately put at the head of the list that we had been asked to submit as a wholly unmerited hardship; what Mr. Gandhi who has so often been refused permission feels on the subject we need not say; but we feel certain that it would be regarded by the entire public as a slur on one of the noblest men in India which it is bound to take to heart. In conclusion we trust this decision would be reconsidered at the earliest possible moment and that permission would be accorded.

Yours sincerely,
SHAUKAT ALI
MOHAMED ALI

S.R. Pandit, Esq.
Offg. Deputy Commissioner,

Source :
Shaukat Ali Papers

40

DEMI-OFFICIAL LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO SIR JAMFS DOBOULAY. SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, HOME DEPARTMENT.

(*Unpublished*)

B-ism-i-llah-i-r-Rahman-i-r-Raheem

Chhindwara
March 1919

I would invite your attention to my letter of the 18th February last in which I had requested you to let us know what, if any, decision had been arrived at by the Government of India on the report of the Committee appointed to investigate the case of our internment. I regret to have to say that not only has that letter not been so far answered, but that it has not even been acknowledged.

I am not unaware of the usual pre-occupations of Government; and I can well understand that at a time when the Inter-Allied Peace Conference is[1] sitting in Paris, and the Reform Proposals are about to be presented to Parliament, and particularly when in India too legislation of a novel and grave nature is on the anvil, the Government of India must be unusually busy. But, I hope I may say without offence, that I wish I was equally convinced that the Government realised the corroding cares of men unjustly deprived of their most cherished liberties and kept in suspense year after year, which offers of release, made and then withdrawn, and the appointments of Committees of investigation and their inquiries and reports only heighten and increase.

1. The conference of 1919 to decide the fate of Axis Powers.

In the letter to which I invite your attention I had explained in some detail how delay had unfortunately occurred at every stage. Of these protracted proceedings, and I think I was justified in hoping that a definite decision should be communicated to us with a reasonable and definite time.

That hope has, however, been belied, and it appears that matters are likely to remain in this indefinite state for an indefinite period. In fact, we have heard that the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India has expressed a desire that we should no longer remain interned, but be restored to full liberty, but that certain officials with whom we were not *persona grata* for reasons wholly unconnected with the war would still wish to prolong our incarceration, and insist for want of anything more reasonable to urge, that we should not be released so long as the Peace Conference continues to discuss the terms of peace and the treaty of peace remains unsigned. If this is true, we can only say that it is characteristic of people, (who) would like to postpone our release as long as they can manage to find some plea for delay, no matter how unconnected with anything within our control, and now that the Russian debacle can no longer be made to serve their purpose and the German menace is a thing of the past, the discussion of the terms of peace, in which every citizen of the Empire should be free to participate, if Empire is to have only any meaning and significance for good, is to be free to participate, if Empire is to have any meaning and significance for good, is put forward as a plea for compelling us to remain tongue-tied. We trust these men will not be permitted to project personal malice into public considerations, and snatch a sort of victory a second time, and that we shall be released without further delay.

Awaiting an early decision.

Source :
Home Department—July 1919

41

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI AND SHAUKAT ALI TO THE VICEROY

(Unpublished)

B-ism-i-llah-i-ir-Rahman-i-r-Raheem

Chhindwara (C.P.)
April 24, 1919

Your Excellency,

We have now after repeated representations received a communication in which the Government has embodied the findings of the Committee appointed by it in September, 1918, to inquire into the case of our internment, and also the decision of Government rejecting the Committee's recommendation.

2. From a Committee so unfairly constituted, and an investigation conducted with such utter disregard of all civilised judicial procedure, no one, and least of all we, who had protested against both at the very outset, could have expected anything better. Nor could any one acquainted with the inner history of our internment when it was ordered four years ago, and knowing how, under the existing system of administration, private caprice so often parades itself in the garb of public considerations, have any occasion for surprise in the fact that even after the Committee's advice urging our release Government should decline to restore us to liberty.

3. Since no method have yet been discovered in assessing the value of personal freedom, it is not possible for us to communicate to another an exact idea of what we lost when we lost our liberty. Nor it is possible for others to gauge the mental anguish we have endured in four years of exile, or the cumulative effect of the daily vexations of a detenu's life. The only form of loss that is capable of any precise

indication is monetary and when it is understood that one result of our internment, and that the least serious, was that we were made to sustain the loss of two and a half lakhs of rupees in the last four years, some idea may be formed of the punitive character of a measure for which it has repeatedly been claimed on behalf of Government that it is purely precautionary.

4. Incidently, Government's dealings with us in these matters provide a fair enough test for judging whether our internment was due solely to public considerations. It is conceivable that public safety may need the restriction of a man's freedom in times of great stress an imminent danger to the State. But it could not conceivably need his financial ruin. To have deprived us of our liberty without just cause, and even without the semblance of an inquiry, was bad enough. But to have knowingly worried us with daily want, and to have forced our children, in spite of our repeated remonstrances, to grow up almost in ignorance for want of funds wherewith to educate them, was worse. One may attempt, if he so desires, to reconcile tyranny with public considerations; but meanness goes well only with malice.

5. However, the loss of one's business and the resulting privations may be borne along with the more grievous loss of personal liberty; and we may well console ourselves for all the disabilities and discomforts that we have patiently borne all these years with reflection that neither we nor our fellow countrymen need be ashamed of our conduct during our prolonged internment. But no Government was expected in the twentieth century to claim even by implication, the right to force a man's conscience. And yet it is only on this hypothesis that the action of Government with respect to the internment of Moslem *Ulama* and public workers, and the virtual suppression of the entire Moslem Press, culminating in the forfeiture of Dr. Ansari's address becomes intelligible.

6. As for ourselves, there was at one time much talk of the discovery of some treasonable correspondence of ours with His late Majesty the Ameer of Afghanistan, and with our spiritual preceptor, Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb of Firangi Mahal, Lucknow, just when our release seemed to be in sight. But when immediately on hearing of it we openly challenged Government to produce these letters, this talk came very soon to subside. When a year later a statement of the reasons for our internment and for the refusal to release us was furnished to us, this preposterous accusation did not make its appear-

ance at all. But this alone could not satisfy us. Unwilling to tolerate any longer a constant shifting of the ground on the part of our accusers, we demanded from the Committee of Inquiry when it came here to examine us a searching investigation into the matter, so that one lie at least might be nailed to the counter. But all the satisfaction that we could obtain was the information, that, in spite of an abundance of vague and undefined charges, not a word had been mentioned before the Committee on the subject of so grave and definite an accusation. Nevertheless we pressed our demand for an inquiry into what must have been a diabolical forgery; but since we have not yet been furnished with the Committee's report, we are unable to say whether it did its obvious duty by instituting a searching inquiry into the matter, or merely manipulated the so-called evidence secretly furnished to it, though never disclose to us, in order to arrive at such eminently convenient results.

7. We are not, however, concerned here with anything beyond the one clear reason on which Government has publicly based its justification of our internment. And it is nothing but our freely expressing and promoting sympathy with our Moslem brethern, and maintaining our allegiance to the Caliph of our Prophet (on whom be God's benedictions and peace) and Commander of the Faithful. This as the reason given in September 1917, for restrictions having been originally imposed on us in May, 1915, and for the refusal to modify the orders nearly two and a half years later. This again ran through all the vague and flimsy charges regarding the Khuddam-i-Ka'ba Society and Pan-Islamism furnished to us in November, 1918. And, finally, this is the only justification now communinated to us alike for the Committee's findings and its recommendation and the Government's rejection of its advice urging our release. We were interned because we freely expressed and promoted a sympathy and maintained an allegiance demanded from us by our Islamic faith. We were not released along with Mrs. Besant and her co-workers because of this sympathy and this allegation or allegiance. And now that the Committee has found this internment four years ago, and for the subsequent refusal to release us, even the advice tendered by it to Government that we should now be released is itself based on the believe that neither the one nor the other can "interfere with the relations between Great Britain and Turkey". Finally, the Government rejects the advice and refuses to release us, because, thank God, "there has been no change whatever in the attitude of the brothers".

But because we are as staunch as ever in our faith in Islam and all that it implies, and hold the same view of honest Imperial policy as before, the destinies of the Empire as well as those of the Caliphate must be settled behind our backs, while we are still bound hand and foot and gagged into the bargain in the interest of the Empire, and presumably also of Islam's safety.

8. Viewing the matter even from the lower plane of politics, we now ask Your Excellency, what can be the significance of the Empire to an Indian if the mere expression of his opinion, declared by no court of law to be unlawful, with respect to a far-reaching settlement of the Empire's future relations with another Empire, involving, as they must, his own and his country's happiness or misery, prosperity or ruin, are permitted to be declared by the Executive and its nominees to be an "interference" and almost a crime! Such a doctorine if allowed to remain unchallenged would reduce the Imperial idea to the meanest trickery; for in the name of the Empire we shall continue to be asked to sacrifice not only wealth and life, but also our eternal salvation, and the only return that we shall continue to receive would be fetters and a gag. If this is to be the standardised value of Imperial Citizenship, then we have clearly reached a stage when every Indian subject of His Majesty's should seriously reconsider his bargain.

9. Looking at the matter, however, from the viewpoint of faith, this denial of liberty to "interfere with the relations between Great Britain and Turkey—in other words, between the State and the Church of Islam—is itself nothing short of interference in a most vital matter of faith. Since Government cannot even now, when the eternal pretence of the war can no longer be pleaded as an excuse, restore to a Mussalman the liberty which he should never have lost, on the solitary ground that "there has been no change whatever in his attitude" in a vital matter of a faith, and he is as unwilling as ever to prejudice his eternal salvation for swearing the creed that demands from the expression and promotion of sympathy with his brothers in faith, and the maintenance of his allegiance to the Commander of the Faithful, we are irresistably driven to ask ourselves whether, consistently with our creed and its universally acknowledged implications, we and other Indian Mussalmans can any longer remain under British Subjection.

10. For four long years we retained the fetters placed on our feet and did not remove the gag from our mouths. But what occurred

during the four years of war with Turkey, and, still more, what is now being enacted at the Peace Conference, makes it obligatory that the seal of silence must be broken and Government must be made to realise the extreme gravity of the issue that is being forced on the Moslem subjects of His Majesty.

11. Moslem, loyalty and support had so often been assured to Government in our generation, and even Moslem contentment was so often unduly taken for granted, that other communities had with some justice made our attitude towards Government almost a matter of reproach. It was a strange return for all his loyalty and support, that, without any effective protest, and often with the concurrence of His Majesty's Government, blow after blow was aimed at the temporal power of Islam. As a prominent Anglo-Indian newspaper admitted, "at all points the independent dominion of the Moslem was hemmed in the threatened, and the future seemed dark for its continuance in any part of the world". Government could not have been unaware of the sorrow and suffering that all this entailed for the Mussalmans of India. No section of the community remained unaffected or unmoved, and princes in their palaces and peasant in their huts alike passed anxious days and sleepless nights. Our public servants, that already carry on their shoulders the main burden of Indian administration so ungrudgingly and on such poor remuneration, and are yet to inordinately subservient to superior authority, and the very policemen, who are too often assumed to have no human sensibilities beyond the one lively desire to serve the bureaucracy and at its bidding denounce every fellow-countrymen, of independent views—they, too, felt the shock of these successive blows, when Europe went on battering and disintegrating the temporal power of Islam, and threatened, the Caliphate itself with isolation and rapid decay.

12. It was not, however, the fear of losing political dominance that troubled the Mussalmans most. The spiritual force of Islam does not depend on political supremacy, and for the most vital tradition of our faith is the humble beginning of Islam in the midst of hostile elements of extraordinary potency and malice, and the ceaseless persecution of our Prophet during the greater part and—of his prophetic career, a tradition that was revived and rejuvenated by the martyrdom of his grandson, Husain, with his little band of two and seventy heroes on the ever memorable field of Kerbala. What the cruel occurrences in Tripoli and the Balkans, at Holy Meshed and Tabriz,

had led Mussalmans to apprehend was that the temporal power of Islam might be so weakened that it might become liable to suffer, without adequate power to prevent, the curtailment of its spiritual influence through the pressure of the temporal power of rival creeds.

13. The Moslem Press of India did every thing in its power to warn Governmeut against the disastrous consequences of the policy it seemed bent on pursuing, and no method was left untried of impressing on Great Britain that if she desired to retain the goodwill of the Mussalmans, a hundred millions of whom were members of her composite Empire, she must be friend and keep the Caliphate on her side, and deal more fairly and equitably with Moslem Kingdoms and countries such as Persia, Afghanistan and Morocco. But non of these warnings was heeded. The result was inevitable, and when war was declared between Great Britain and Turkey, some sort of an apologia as well as assurance was felt to be needed.

14. On the authority of His Majesty's Government Your Excellency's predecessor gave a most solemn pledge "in regard to the Holy Places of Arabia, including the Holy Shrines of Mesopotamia and the port of Jeddah, in order that there may be no misunderstanding on the part of His Majesty's most loyal Moslem subjects as to the attitude of His Majesty's Government in this War". This pledge was to the effect that "these Holy Places and Jeddah will be immune from attack or molestation by the British military and naval forces"; and it was supplemented by the announcement that "at the request of His Majesty's Government, the Governments of France and Russia had given similar assurance". Nevertheless it is now admitted that "a close blockade of the coast of the Red Sea was instituted"; and it is clear that the Arabs of the holiest of the Holy Places of Islam were threatened with certain starvation in order to compel them to revolt against their temporal sovereign and renounce the allegation which they owed under the law of Islam to the legitimate successor of the Arabian Prophet. The chronicler of the *Times* newspaper adds that subsequently "events were so far advanced as to warrant a landing of arms at Rabegh", a coast town on the pilgrim route midway between the Sacred Harems of Mecca. Later, "a meeting took place with one of the sons of the Emir and Grand Sheriff of Mecca", and "the die was cast by the Grand Sheriff for revolt". At British instigation, and presumably with British support, even if the precise nature of it has not yet been disclosed in India the forces of the Servant of the Holy Places were attacked at Mecca, and the garrison fell into the hands

of the renegades. Then began the siege of Jeddah, the port of Mecca exploitly included in the British pledge and Allied assurance of immunity, and here it is announced, without any apparent qualms, that the renegades had the assistance of "the supporting British war-ships". It is said that they "could not approach nearer than 2000 to 3000 yards and the inevitable mirage made the shooting difficult". "Religious prejudice"-such is the phrase-"forbade the landing of a spotting officer". But—and this is sufficiently significant of or the entire business—"towards the end, when the ships' surgeons had ministered to the wounded Arabs, this latter difficulty was overcome". It is needless to pursue any further this chronicle of the manner in which a solemn pledge was kept in the case of Jeddah "in the spirit and the latter Medina, the Sacred Harem of our Prophet, resisted the renegades of Mecca to the last; so its surrender had to be provided for directly by the British in the terms of the armistice forced on the Servant of the Holy Places; and even then his forces had to be made to evacuate the Sacred Harem by means of a British threat. The third Sacred Harem of Jerusalem was attacked practically by British forces alone.

* * * *

19. The war is now over; but the spirit of tyranny that it generated is still aboard, and while, on the one hand, it is being proclaimed in high sounding phrases that those who are assembled at Paris to decide the destinies of the world on a more equitable and humane basis than Brute Force, are not the master of the people but their servants, the Government, on the other hand, is denying to the people of India even the latest expression of opinion on questions that vitally concern them. Not only is the gag not to be removed yet from our own mouths, but a gag of prodigious proportions has been prepared from now for silencing more than three hundred millions of God's articulate creatures. The Rowlatt Bill just enacted in the most tyrannical manner has ended the reign of law and substituted a reign of terror in its place, and although it affects every section of the people of India, the Mussalmans are certain to be its first, and its worst victims. It has been the Moslem Press that has suffered most under the Press Act; and the same has been true of the Defence of India Act, if we only exclude the unfortunate young men of Bengal routing in solitary cells or swampy island without trial or hope of release. Even those who profess a pathetic optimism, and hope against hope that the bureaucracy armed with the strength

of the giant will not use it as tyrannically as the giant, need only have access to our own experience to be cured of this distressing delusion. We, who have already had enough experience of "Executive discretion", and of "investigating authorities", sitting in camera, parcially inquiring into undefined charges, and dealing with undisclosed "evidence" without the help of any code or procedure or law of evidence, submitting reports that cannot bear the light of the day, and being finally dismissed as ignorant persons for all their pains, can claim to speak with some authority, and say that the "Black Act" is nothing more or less than the virtual outlawry.

20. The forfeiture of Dr. Ansari's[1] address which should have been placed by Government with its fullest support on the table of the Peace Conference as an authoritative exposition of Islamic law on the subjects of the Caliphate, the Jazeerat-ul-Arab and the Holy Places, and which was replete with Quranic texts and the Prophet's Traditions, is sure to create the impression that Government is not only anxious to keep the Moslems muzzled when their fate is being discussed and decided by men of other creeds, but that India itself is no longer safe for Islam and its free exposition. But has the Government realised to what this would undoubtedly lead ? When a land is not safe for Islam a Moslem has only two alternatives—*Jehad* or *Hijrat.* That is to say, he must either make use of every force God has given him for the liberation of the land and the ensurement of perfect freedom for the practice and preaching of Islam, or he must migrate to some other and freer land with a view to return to his Motherland when it is once more safe for Islam. This is no new doctrine, but as old as the eventful *Hijrat* of our Prophet thirteen hundred years ago, in which the Moslem Era had its birth, and from which it takes its name.

1. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari (1880-1936) graduated in medical science and proceeded to England on Nizam's scholarship for higher education. He passed M.D. and M.S. in 1905 and served English medical service. He met Motilal Nehru in London and was so imbued with the nationalist ideas that he left service and came to India and participated in the national movement in India. He was both a Leaguer and a Congressite and played an important rôle in national politics.

21. In view of our weak condition, migration is the only alternative for us; and if we are forced either to forswear our faith; or leave our Motherland, we could only migrate from this great country to which Islam brought its blessings more than twelve hundred years ago. A Mussalman is required by his faith, which is catholic and universal, to maintain an extraordinary detachment from country and race. But Islam is firmly based on the solid rock of human nature, and we are neither required to cultivate, nor have we in fact cultivated an unnatural indifference to the land we live in, or to the good people who inhabit it along with us. Millions of ties that have been formed in our twelve century long sojourn in India would seek to keep us tied down to it, and when we migrate, as we must, the minarets of our mosques would continue to beckon to us, and their domes, that would resound no more with the cries of "God is Greatest", would by their very silence recall us to them. And even if we proved unresponsive to the fraternal calls of the living, the non-Moslem compatriots with whom we have for so many centuries wrought for the good of our Motherland, and have together developed India's marvellous Arts and Culture, the graves of our ancestors would exercise over us their spiritual spell. But a greater call would make us leave this dear land of ours—never dearer than now that we would be taking our leave of it—for it would be the imperative call of religious duty. But when it is understood that we shall be leaving it only in order to work for its liberation from lawless laws and the restoration of all its rights and privileges as the land of the free that God had made it, and that it is destined soon to be, we do not fear we shall be accused of want of patriotism or of desertion in the hour of its peril. Our mosques and the bones of our ancestors we shall entrust to the loving and reverential care of our non-Moslem fellow countrymen; and God in His beneficence and infinite mercy has not left us in these wonderful days without many convincing proofs that this sacred trust will be in safe and deserving hands.

22. This step, which we shall now have to consider with all the seriousness that its very nature demands, will be perhaps the most decisive in the history of our community since the *Hijrat* of our Holy Prophet. Discouraging and bitterly painful as our experience has been in recent years, we feel that before we finally take it one more opportunity must be given to the Government to review its attitude towards the people, and to see the drift of its policy of negation of

Swadharma, in addition to the neglect of Swadeshi and denial of Swarajya.

23. We have so far studiously refrained from referring to more exclusively political affairs, though true politics, which comprises all public activities of mankind, is to us, as it is to our guide, philosopher and friend, Mahatma Gandhi, as much part of our religion as the Moslem demand for the restoration of the Holy Places of Islam. Every legitimate claim must rest on the basis of Truth, and Truth is nothing but Faith. We therefore whole-heartedly identify ourselves with the clear and emphatic political demand of the country for constitutional reform and the better ensurement of our civic rights as voiced by the Indian National Congress and the All-India Moslem League, now happily working together for the commonweal. Having done this, we may for the present safely leave the advocacy of these general Indian claims in the hands of such great leaders of the people as Mahatma Gandhi, Lokmanaya Tilak and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, and other Congressmen and members of the League.

24. We have now only to define the more particularly Moslem demands though we are happy in the belief that they are no longer exclusively urged by the Mussalmans of India, but have received from our fellow countrymen of other creeds also a firm pledge of support even unto death. These demands are as follows :—

I. There should never be any attempt to interfere by pressure or persuasion in the free choice by the Mussalmans of the Caliph of their Prophet.

II. No Mussalman, whether a soldier or a civilian, should be asked to assist in any manner whatsoever in the prosecution of war, or of any other hostile design, against the Caliph, when he has declared a *Jehad* in the exercise of the functions of the Caliphate and such assistance has become *haram* thereafter according to the law of Islam; and any Mussalmans undergoing at present any form of punishment for their refusal to render such assistance should be given complete amnesty.

III. No part of the territories included in the expression Jazeerat-ul-Arab, as defined by the Moslem religious authorities and lexicographers should be directly or indirectly occupied, or subject to any form of non-Moslem control, but must remain as heretofore under independent Moslem occupation and control, as required by the testa-

mentary injunction of the Holy Prophet; and the present occupation and control of every portion of such territories opposed to the letter or the spirit of this injunction should forthwith cease.

IV. There should be no attempt to remove, whether directly or indirectly, from the independent, indivisible and inalienable sovereignty of the Caliph, who is the recognised Servant of the Holy Places and Warden of the Holy Shrines, any portion of the territories in which such Holy Places and Shrines are situated, including, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing expressions, the territories in which are situated three Sacred Harems of Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem, and the Holy Shrines in Najaf, Kerbela, Baghdad, Kazimain, Sameara, Constantinople and Konieh; and such territories should forthwith be evacuated by the forces of His Majesty and of the Allied and Associated Governments and restored to the Caliph, the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire.

V. Nor should there be any such attempt to dismember and parcel out and even among Moslem Government, or in any other manner weaken the Caliph's Empire with the object of weakening the temporal power of Islam, and thereby make it liable to suffer, without adequate power to prevent the curtailment of its spiritual influence through the pressure of the temporal power of other creeds.

VI. His Majesty's Government should restore to the Caliph the Vilayat of Egypt, so that it may once more be an integral portion of his empire, and it should make determined efforts to induce other powers also to restore similar such other territories, like Bosnia Herzegovina and Tripoli, and they have forcibly been taken from him; and similar justice should be done in case of other Moslem territories like those of Algiers, Tunis, Morocco, the Caucasus and the Khanates and Kingdoms of Central Asia.

VII. If, as the result of the Peace Conference, the principle of Self-Determination is also to be applied to the inhabitants of any territory, it should also be applied to the inhabitants of all territories that have been under Ottoman and other Moslem Government; and the agency for ascertaining the result of such self-determination, which should be proportionally Moslem, should include Indian Mussalmans, such as Rulers of Moslem Indian States, divines and political leaders, to be selected by the All-India Moslem League; and the Moslem delegation should be free to act in the aforesaid terri-

tories on the divine injunction : "Verily all Moslems are brothers; wherefore make peace between your brothers."

VIII. No Mussalman should in any manner be deprived of his liberty, or otherwise punished, molested or disquieted by reason of his expressing and promoting sympathy with his brother Mussalmans in any part of the world, or maintaining and strengthening the allegiance of all Mussalmans to the Caliph of the Holy Prophet, and Commander of the Faithful; and all persons thus dealt with should be forthwith set at Liberty; and all newspapers suppressed for a like reason should be permitted free publication and all monetary losses sustained by any persons or newspapers through such action of Government should be made good.

IX. Greater respect should be paid in the future to the universal sentiment of Indian Mussalmans; that determined efforts should be made by British Imperial authorities to earn the good-will and cultivate the friendship of Moslem Governments, such as those of Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan and Morocco, by countenancing whether on the part of His Majesty's Government or of others, no dealings that are not open, fair and equitable; and as an earnest of this policy, such Moslem Governments should not be excluded from any of the benefits of any organisation such as the project League of Nations, but should be made equal participants therein along with other Governments.

We are,
Your Excellency's Faithfully,
SHAUKAT ALI
MOHAMED ALI

His Excellency the Viceroy
And Governor-General of India
Simla

Source :
Home Department, July 1919

42

LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI TO CHOWDHRY KHALIQUZZAMAN OF LUCKNOW (EXTRACT FROM URDU TRANSLATED BY THE DEPARTMENT)

(*Unpublished*)

Chhindwara
10th May 1919

I issued the orders for my release yesterday (sic.). I wrote to the Chief Commisssioner after the Friday prayers that I would not in future comply with any order which may be sent to me under the Defence of India Act. I read out this letter, and mentioned my demands about Islamic questions embodied in my letter of the 24th April, sent to the Viceroy, I made it clear that the Muhammadans should not render any kind of assistance, unless all Islamic questions, were decided in their favour. May God give me power never to swerve from the right path. We are now mischief-mongers. If our advice is accepted, the foundations of the Empire will be strengthened but if not, the Mussalmans have not sat quiet in the past, nor will they sit quiet, nor will they allow other to sit quiet. Yesterday's papers contained an account of the disturbances on the Frontier. All this trouble is due to the treatment of the sacred places and sacred countries. Our advice should be accepted, and (all) internees should be released, and all these questions should be settled through their intervention. Otherwise no Muslim will render any assistance in the war either in India or outside India. It will even be obligatory on him to join the *Jehad* in India. All these facts should be brought to the notice of Government. I have also written to Mr. Gandhi and sent a copy of the letter to the Maulana Saheb. We are joining the Satyagraha movement, but in taking the vow we have

added the Islamic words, which we added to the undertaking we gave. Compliance with religious injunctions is the primary duty.

See the letter which Muhammad sent to the Maulana. I will write tomorrow. What will the Government do ? I do not care. It is advisable that we should be released and that all these questions should be settled by our intervention. Show this letter to all my friends.

Source :
Home Department, July 1919

43

LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI AND MOHAMED ALI TO HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJA OF HOLKAR

(*Unpublished*)

Chhindwara
14th May 1919

We have the honour of submitting herewith a copy of the representation we had addressed on April 24th last to His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India. It contains the demands of the Mussalmans on the subjects of the Caliphate, the Jazeerat-ul-Arab reserved by our Holy Prophet for Moslem sovereignty and occupation alone, and the Holy Places of Islam of which the Caliph alone is the universally recognised Servant and Warden.

So far the British Imperial authorities do not seem to have respected sufficiently the Moslem religious point of view, nor appreciated a Mussalman's imperative religious obligations and duties; and if this attitude continues throughout this great world-crisis, it means the disruption of the Empire which Indian Princes must endeavour to prevent as much as British Indian subjects. Knowing that Your Highness has Moslem subjects also who share these obligations, aspirations and sentiments with us, and who receive equal consideration at Your Highness's hands with their non-Moslem fellow-subjects, and knowing again that Your Highness has at this moment in His Highness the Maharaja Sahib of Bikaner a representative at the Peace Conference at Paris and finally that Your Highness can guide the British Government aright at a moment when it needs such guidance greatly, we have ventured to submit for Your Highness's perusal this representation of ours, and we trust recognising the perfect justice of our demands Your Highness will advise to Government to satisfy them at a very eaily date. In concluding this prayer we need only state that we love this dear country of ours and desire

that peace and prosperity, contentment and progress should have perpetual reign here, but we feel that this is wholly impossible if a fourth of its population is made to think that it is no longer safe for Islam, the faith it believes in and practices and would preach in a peaceful manner. The Mussalmans are being driven to this conclusion, and we appeal to Your Highness, although you do not share their faith, to assist them as their compatriot and the ruler of Moslems and non-Moslems alike to keep their Motherland safe for their faith and to strengthen thereby the foundations of this great Empire which most otherwise totter to the ground. Confident in the ancestral courage of Your Highness and in your great regard for your Moslem subject as well as your loyalty to the Empire.

With Your Highness's permission we may add just one word more. Already this attitude of the British Imperial authorities seems to be on the point of involving them in a war with a neighhouring Moslem kingdom which, in view of its small size and resources and the need of the ruler to consolidate his position at home after the tragic events that have brought him to his throne, could never have otherwise dreamt of invading such a vast and resourceful Empire as ours. Before we precipitately accept this quarrel as our own, we owe a duty to Truth and Justice and Religious Toleration to ascertain for ourselves that it is not due to the very attitude which has driven Indian Mussalmans to contemplate the only other alternative in the circumstances, viz., migration, because they are too weak to resort to *Jehad.*

Source :
Home Department, July 1919

44

LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI AND MOHAMED ALI TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY,

(*Unpublished*)

Chindwara, C.P.
14th May, 1919

(*With the name of Allah, the Most Merciful and the Most Compassionate*)

We have learnt that Your Excellency in Council has by a notification in the local official Gazette declared forfeited to His Majesty all printed copies of our representation addressed to His Excellency the Viceroy on the 24th April last on the subject of the Caliphate, the Jazeerat-ul-Arab and the Holy Places of Islam, and embodying Moslem demands, including the demand that, when in the exercise of his religious function, the Caliph has declared *Jehad*, no Moslem, whether a soldier or a civilian, should be asked to give any sort or kind of assistance in the prosecution of a war or other hostile design against him and those engaged in the *Jehad*, since it becomes *haram* or forbidden thereafter according to Moslem law.

We consider Your Excellency's declaration illegal, both in form and substance, and desire to have its validity tested in the High Court of Judicature at Bombay. We have accordingly submitted a printed copy of the above representation which is our property to the Commissioner of Police, Bombay, requesting him to intimate it to us by return of post if he seizes it under the Press Act, and informing him that in that case he would seize it under our protest.

Our Excellency may perhaps be aware that one of the most distinguished Chief Justice of the High Court of Bombay in a judgment that he delivered as Chief Justice of the High Court of Calcutta, referred to the Act under which Your Excellency in Council has acted in the following terms :

The Advocate-General has convinced me that the Government's view of this piece of legislation is correct, and that the High Court's power of intervention is the narrowest; its power to pronounce on the legality of the forfeiture by reason of failure to observe the mandatory conditions of the Act is barred; the ability to pronounce on the wisdom of the Executive order is withheld; and its functions are limited to consider whether the applicant to it has discharged the almost hopeless task of establishing that his pamphlet does not contain words which fall within the all-comprehensive provisions of the Act. I describe it as an almost hopeless task because the terms of Section 4 are so wide that it is scarcely conceivable that any publication would attract the notice of the Government in this connection to which some provision of that section might not "directly or indirectly whether by inference, suggestion, allusion, metaphor, implication or otherwise" apply.

In another place in the same judgment he said:

"The provisions of Section 4 are very comprehensive and its language is as wide as human ingenuity could make it. Indeed it appears to me to embrace the whole range of varying degrees of assurance from certainty on the one side to the very limits of impossibility on the other. It is difficult to see to what lengths the operation of this section might not be plausibly extended by an ingenious mind. They would certainly extend to writings that may even command approval. An attack on that degraded section of the public which lives on the misery and shame of others would come within this widespread net; the praise of a class might not be free from risk. Much that is regarded as standard literature might undoubtedly be caught."

Such is the piece of legislation under which Your Excellency's Government has acted, and almost hopeless is the task that we have been set in establishing the negative that our representation to His Excellency the Viceroy, intended merely to induce the Government of India and the Imperial authorities to undertake a much-needed reform of their attitude towards Islam and Moslems, does not deserve the fate it has met at the hands of Your Excellency's Government. But even this almost hopeless task becomes perfectly hopeless if we are prevented from applying to the High Court of Bombay to exercise even the "narrowest power of intervention" allowed to it under the Press Act, and appearing before it to establish

an almost impossible negative. Although on the 9th instant we have at long last intimated to the local Government that we shall no longer consider ourselves bound to comply with the requirements as to residence in a specified area, among others, contained in the orders issued to us under the Defence of India Rules, we have no reason to believe that those orders have been yet withdrawn. In the circumstances our exit from this place may be barred, and we prevented from proceeding to Bombay to contest the validity of the declaration of Your Excellency in Council. This would be such a manifest denial of justice that we cannot conceive Your Excellency would tolerate it; and it is in this belief that we now apply to you to arrange with the Government of India that we should be provided with due facilities for the purpose of seeking the redress that even such a narrowly conceived and tyrannical measure as the Press Act makes it just possible to secure at the hands of the Law.

Source :
Home Department, July 1919

45

LETTER FROM MESSRS. SHAUKAT ALI, SERVANT OF KAABA, AND MOHAMED ALI, SERVANT OF KAABA, TO THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, BOMBAY

(*Unpublished*)

Chhindwara (C.P.)
14th May 1919

(*With the name of Allah, the Most Merciful and the Most Compassionate.*)

We note that the Local Government of Bombay has under Section 12 (1) of the Indian Press Act declared the forfeiture of all printed copies of our representation to His Excellency the Viceroy on the subject of the Moslems' religious duties and communal sentiments and their demands on the subject of the Caliphate, the Jazeerat-ul-Arab and the Holy Places of Islam including the demand for exemption of all Mussalmans, whether soldiers or civilians from every form of assistance in prosecuting a war or other hostile design against the Caliph and those engaged in *Jehad* when in the exercise of his religious function he has declared a *Jehad* and all further assistance of this kind has become *haram* or forbidden. We do not believe that this declaration is legal or in any way justified, and desire to contest its validity in a law court. We hereby tender a copy of our representation declared to be forfeited, and hereby give you notice that if you seize it, you do so under our protest. If, however, you chose to do so, kindly intimate the fact to us by return post, and acknowledge the receipt of this communication and of the copy of our representation herein enclosed.

Source :
Home Department, July 1919

46

LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI, KHADIM-I-KAABA, TO MR. GHULAM MUHAMMAD,

Chhindwara
14th May 1919

(Unpublished)

I am writing these few lines to you as an old friend. I have been reading the "Moslem Herald" very carefully. I am afraid the paper would not succeed unless you bring it into line with the general policy of the Moslems. Nawab Ali Chaudhuri, whom I know very well, is not only incompetent to write or think for himself but just at present he is anti-Moslem. You cannot force him as exponent of sound Moslem views. Of course there are great dangers ahead if you follow the real Moslem policy. If we cannot speak the truth then for God's sake don't utter any untruths also. Keep quiet over such occasions. Our positions as Mussalman believing in Islam is this—we cannot give any help to England in this war or any other war as long as even an inch of our sacred lands is in the hands of outsiders, we will take no rest nor give peace to anybody else. The whole Moslem world would fight for these lands for years and centuries and there would be rivers of blood. We warned England before and we have warned it again but so far no attention is paid to our demands. The Empire escaped through our assistance in the last war. They would not escape again if they persist in their present policy of madness. This is not our quarrel. The Amir is not coming to attack India for the rich lands of Punjab—that's a lie. He is coming as an avenger of the insults offered to Islam. He is a *Mujahid*. He is attacking in India the attackers of Jedda, Palestine and Jazirat-ul-Arab. It is *haram* on us to fight against him. In fact unless Government realises the situation and accepts our demands and at once act according to them we according to our Koran have to help in the "*Jihad*." This is God's truth and we should not keep it back. We beg Government even now to hear us and do as we ask them to do. All sacred places of Islam

should be evacuated at once and given into the custody of the Caliph of Islam. The other Molsem states like Egypt should be returned to their rightful owners, all Moslem internees and other political prisoners released, all the repressive laws repealed and swaraj granted to us. Then God willing we will go and intercede to save the Empire from the great peril. It is no use abusing people for the sake of pleasing those in authority. They only despise such men though taking full advantage of their weakness. I know you are a Mussalman and feel for Islam as much as any of us. That is why I have taken the liberty of addressing you so freely. Do your best for Islam. For God's sake do nothing to weaken us or our faith. Hope this finds you well. Please ask your Editor to read carefully our representation—the Moslem case has been put in it squarely and fairly. Mr. Gandhi is really a good man and a brave man. He has done a great deal for the Empire and yet the Anglo-Indian reptile press is shouting for his head. He is heart and soul with us over the question of Khilafat and sacred places of Islam. He wants Moslems to speak out boldly and openly, put their claims before the Government and the world. Our Hindu brethren will help us. God be with you. Don't reply. I want to see my reply in the "*Moslem Herald*" and its changed policy.

Source :
Home Department, July 1919

47

DEMI-OFFICIAL LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI, TO THE HON' BLE SIR JAMES DUBOULAY, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, HOME DEPARTMENT

Chhindwara
18th February, 1919

(*Unpublished*)

B-ism-i-llah-i-r-rahman'-r-Raheem.

After having waited for more than two months for the decision of the Government on the report of the Committee that inquired into the case of our internment, I, venture to-day to write to ask whether any decision has yet been arrived at, and, if so, what it is. In case Government has not yet arrived at any decision, we shall be glad to know when one may be expected.

After a consideration of the patience and fortitude with which we have so far borne the loss of our liberty, you will, I trust, yourself admit that this inquiry is not the result of any impatience on our part. Four years constitute a no small slice in any man's life, and even if some little impatience is discernible after a paralysis of all activity save that of thought and emotion, for so long a period, and that too in the case of persons used to a life of more than average activity, it would only argue that the liberty lost was not an unprized possession.

Had all this period been merely a blank, it would even then have been no small grievance. But the blank has been amply filled in by sufferings and privations which I have no desire to discuss here. It is necessary, however, to state that, leaving out of account the mental anguish that we have so long endured and the daily vexations of a detenus' life that we had to bear, we have sustained large material losses. We had to forgo the profits of our industry and intelligence that would have normally amounted to more than a lakh

of rupees in the last 4 years in the case of each of us; while we have been made to shoulder the heavy burden of Rs. 60,000, being the amount of out-of-pocket expenses unavoidably incurred mainly on account of the interest that has accrued during our internment on capital previously borrowed for our concerns. The two together amount to little short of three lakhs of rupees.

All that we have received in lieu of the normal profits of business is the subsistence allowance (including, in the case of my brother, the pension he had already earned after 17 years of meritorious public service) which originally amounted to Rs. 250 per mensem for each of us, and was, after more than a year and a half of internment, raised to Rs. 300. In June last, after another interval of more than a year and a half, this was increased to Rs. 400 per mensem, and these subsequent increases, though themselves far from adequate, as we have only too frequently been driven to show, for the maintenance of large families of growing children, whose educational and other wants have doubled in these four years, and all the more so when the level of prices of all commodities has risen far above the high water-mark of any famine,—I submit that these increases sanctioned by Government themselves imply that the allowances as previously fixed were wholly inadequate. And yet no heed has been paid to our repeated representations that retrospective effect should be given to the orders sanctioning the increases, so that we could recoup ourselves for part of the sale proceeds of our *Jagirs* and other property with the help of which we at first eked out the meagre subsistence allowances, and could repay the debts, local and otherwise, which we were forced to incur on account of ordinary household expenditure even on the reduced scale of living in our exile here, when we had exhausted these few resources left to us after our internment and the strangulation of "The *Hamdard*."

As regards the out-of-pocket expenses, Government has twice refused to accept any liability for them, though it arose directly out of our internment, and this decision has been based on the mistaken ground that they are "business losses," as if we were free during our internment and exile to carry on business of any kind, and in the course of it risked these losses in the vain hope of possible and probable gain.

Add to these the loss of so many of our nearest relations and dearest friends whom we could not see even in their last moments;

the ill-health we ourselves and our people had to suffer; and last, but not least, the anguish of our mother, ill suppressed and vainly disguised during all these years, every one of which has aged her like five years of normal life,—add these and you will not, I feel sure, accuse of us any impatience if we now desire to know when precisely the orders of internment that have brought all these sufferings upon us and ours will finally be cancelled.

In recounting these sufferings, however, I do not desire that pity for us should cause Government to deviate even by a hair's breadth from the path of stern duty that it may have chalked out for itself. Neither my brother nor I, and, need hardly say, still less our mother, who has of her own free will, and even against our wishes, shared our exile from the very first day, even felt any desire to put forward any appeals ad miscricordiam. Nor do we feel any such desire now that we have already gone through the worst, and have little anxiety for anything that the future may yet have in store for us. We have always asked for justice and claim nothing but that to-day.

But I may well add that, on the other hand, we have also never felt any desire to appear a contumacious, and in so simple and ordinary a matter as safeguarding our religious beliefs and observances, which after all is the plain duty of every one of us who has a soul to be saved, and believes, as he must, that the claims of personal salvation hereafter rank even above those of public safety here, we should be sorry to appear to pose as heroes and martyrs. Such sufferings and privations as ours have only too often been the lot of mankind, in all ages and climes, and even to-day so many of our own countrymen and co-religionists have had to bear far worse things than have yet fallen to our share. Their example, if nothing else, should prevent us from indulging in any such pretensions, and, in fact, brace us up for such further sufferings as the future may bring.

But even apart from a consideration of the cases of those of our co-religionists that have suffered like us or even more than ourselves, Government has had ample opportunity of late to judge whether the beliefs held by us and our fellow-sufferers are peculiar to ourselves and held or paraded merely to disconcert and embarass it, or are, on the contrary, shared by all our co-religionists, educated and ignorant, laymen and divines. Even those that were never "politically minded" are at last saying precisely what we had so often said long before our internment, and no penalties that we have been made to suffer

in the interval have silenced the protests with which India is ringing to-day from one end to the other, while internment has sealed our lips and removed us from all contact with our people. All this, I feel confident, must force Government to one and one conclusion only, namely, that we have been only normal Mussalmans, distinguished, if at all, by nothing more than a frank and fearless exposition of the innermost thoughts of our people, and that in reality we have in the process of this exposition exposed ourselves to manifold risks of official misunderstanding and private malice less in our own interests or even those of our people than of a Government alien in race, and religion, and therefore all the more in need of such exposition.

But whether we have merely been interpreters of views universally held by our people or advocates of any views of our own not so universally shared, we submit we have never stepped beyond the limit of the fundamental inalienable right of every man to determine freely for himself what shall be his faith, and to practise it and preach it without let or hindrance so long as he does not thereby interfere with his fellow men practising and preaching the faiths that they have equally freely determined for themselves. This is the basis of religious toleration, and one of the main foundations on which the allegiance of the subject to his sovereign stands and supports itself.

All this, however, needs no repetition after the submission of our representations to the Committee. I hope the Government has found time to consider them and the report of the Committee of Inquiry, and will soon announce its final decision. In expressing this hope I may hope without offence, recall that much delay has unfortunately taken place almost at every stage in these protracted proceedings. I need say nothing now of the release foreshadowed early in September, 1917, but for some reasons subsequently refused, though it is clear that the "previous papers" that were then generally believed to have come in the way of our release, including letters to His Majesty the Ameer of Kabul and to our religious preceptor, were not put forward now as reasons for continuing our internment, nor placed before the Committee. But to come to more recent times, even after the Government's acceptance of the recommendations of the Honourable Mr. Surendranath Banerjee that Committes should be appointed to examine the cases of the interned, nothing was done for many months so far as we were concerned. We understand that it was not until July, 1918 that the Honourable the Home Member began to express

the desire of Government to appoint a Committee to inquire into our case; but no such Committee was in fact appointed until the end of September, and even then the statement of charges was not furnished to us for a month and a half. No doubt when this had been furnished, we were required to submit our written defence, if we had any to submit, without delay; and we were practically given but a bare week in which to submit it. It is also true that the Committee did not take long to go through our representations, and examined us in person soon after and left Chhindwara early in December. We understand that it submitted its report not long afterwards; but the decision of the Government of India has not yet been announced, and we are still kept in suspense here, while our families are kept in still greater suspense at Rampur, since they do not know whether they should rejoin us here, and are not enabled to settle down at home either. Need we add that, whether free or interned, we desire a more normal sort of life than the one we have had to lead during the past year and a half with its constant interruptions and frequent sensations.

The Defence of India Act was placed on the Statute Book as a war measure, pure and simple, and we have been given to understand that but for the war we would not have been deprived of our liberty. For our part, we have always repudiated every suggestion of any action of ours unauthorised by law and prejudicial to the defence of India or the public safety. But even if long after the outbreak of war it was really necessary to deprive us of our liberty, our release should have been ordered more than three months ago when hostilities had altogether ceased and no kind of public danger could have any longer been apprehended from our unfettered freedom. No public consideration can, I take leave to submit, justify our incarceration a moment longer, and the watchful justice of a righteous government should be sure shield to guard every subject.

Apologising for the length of my letter, and trusting that the final decision of Government will soon be announced.

Source :

Home Department July, 1919

48

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO THE NAWAB OF JAORA.

Chhindwara
15th May 1919

(*Unpublished*)

Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim

Your Highness,

We have already forwarded for your Highness's perusal the representation we submitted to His Excellency the Viceroy on the 24th April. When we wrote that representation we could not have dreamt that the attitude of the British Imperial authorities and the Government of India which had driven us to contemplate *Hijrat* would drive the Moslem Kingdom beyond our borders to declare *Jehad*. But the ways of Providence are not always foreseen by Mortals, though the motive of the two actions being the same, we can well feel what the young and spirited Amir must have felt concerning Islam and the Caliphate. This war is clearly not ours and we do trust that none of us will be stampeded into taking up another's battle. We are prepared to spare our dear Motherland all risk of war by approaching His Majesty the Amir and asking him to sheath the sword he has unsheathed obviously in the cause of Islam and Justice to India, provided all our demands, Indian and Moslem, are forthwith conceded. But otherwise, let those who have provoked this holy war fight it out. We cannot help them and must act up to our faith and according to our capacity. Your Highness is a Mussalman and God's Slave and the Prophet's follower first and an ally and friend of the British next and even if the Government can be included in the expression Ūlialamre Minkum we have first to obey God and His Prophet and the Commandment (Arabic) and if there is disagreement on any point refer it to Allah and the Prophet if you believe in Allah and the day of judgment makes it clear whom we must serve in such a contingency as this. This is no time for sermons and we have been but indifferent followers to our great and Holy

Prophet. But with all our sins we do love this dear faith of his and we know Your Highness also to do the same. That is why we address this appeal to Your Highness to live up to the faith that is ours and the example of our saints and martyrs and we pray to God to give Your Highness and all of us the necessary strength and power and fortitude and steadfastness, our post is now being intercepted because after 4 long years of incarceration we have decided since the 9th instant to abide by the Defence of India Act no more. We have taken care, however, that this letter of ours should reach Your Highness safely and we expect the fullest response in action, though no letter in reply. Kindly convey our appeal for the pursuit of Truth and Justice and Love of India to your friend His Highness the Maharaja Saheb of Rutlam who is a gentleman and a Prince among men and also to other princes whom Your Highness can influence in so noble a cause. We want peace and prosperity in India; but if through folly or want of courage we are every time stampeded into fighting the battles of others we shall have neither the one nor the other. Your Highness can yet endeavour to influence the Government and bring it to realise the madness and the grave injustice of its present courses and we appeal to you in the name of Islam, of India ay ! even in the name of the Empire to do all you can to make Government understand the true situation even to-day. May you succeed and may God bless you. With affectionate and devoted admiration from both of us.

Your Highness' obedient servant,
MOHAMED ALI.
SERVANT OF KA'BA.

Source :
Home Department July, 1919

49

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO THE CHIFF COMMISSIONER, PACHMARHI (C.P.)

(Unpublished)

B-ism-i-llah-i-r-Rahman-ir-Raheem.

Chhindwara (C.P.),
May 9th, 1919.

Dear Sir,

In our letter of the 24th April addressed to His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General of India we have clearly and at considerable length explained our own position and that of our people, and, after defining the legitimate demands of the Mussalmans concerning the Caliphate, the Jazeerat-ul-Arab and the Holy Places, we urged on His Excellency's Government the extreme necessity of their early satisfaction. In concluding that letter we have declared that "we shall wait for a reasonable length of time for an indication of a change for the better in the Government's attitude which the situation in India and abroad so urgently demands, and that if no convincing proof is given of such a change at an early date, and Indian and Moslem claims continue to receive the same disdainful treatment, it will be our imperative duty to ask for our passports, and to recommend the same grave and extremely painful step to our co-religionists, so that they and we could migrate to some other land where to be a believing Mussalman and an ardent patriot is not considered a crime". We are still awaiting sufficiently convincing proofs of a change in Government's attitude; though we regret to have to say that none has so far been furnished.

2. We had also declared in that letter that in the meantime "so long as the 'Black Act' remained on the Statute Book, we shall not consider ourselves bound to obey it, and that we shall break it and

such other laws also as we might break without prejudice to our faith, and are advised by our friends and fellow-workers to break." In deference to the appeal of our friend and counsellor, Mahatma Gandhi, we refrain at present from civil disobedience of other laws. But the Defence of India Act is admittedly the model on which the Black Act has been framed; and now that the war is virtually over, there can be no possible excuse for continuing the restrictions imposed under that Act on the liberty of any person during the war, much less on ours whose restorations to freedom even an unfairly constituted Committee appointed by Government itself had advised several months ago. We have, therefore, after very careful and prolonged consideration, decided that from this day forward we should not consider ourselves interned under the Defence of India Act, which was an unjust, and, in fact, an unlawful measure, and has been administered in an unjust and tyrannical fashion.

3. Only a week now remains for us to complete four long years of subjection to this tyranny, and on declaring our refusal to remain in subjection to it any longer, we invite Government to examine "the political situation in all its bearings", which, in its opinion, the Committee it had itself appointed was not in a position to appreciate. Is that situation any better on the 9th May, 1919, than it was on the 16th May, 1915, when we were first interned; or has it steadily grown appreciably and palpably worse? If Government is not too reckless even now to ascertain the outcome of its policy of coercion and "frightfulness" into which it had plunged, and which it has only too relentlessly pursued, it has only to look around. Just as one he has to beget a thousand others blacker than itself in order to sustain it, repression always needs more and more repression even to have the appearance of being effective; and each succeeding dose has to be made more potent in order to inspire the desired degree of terror. The only justification of repression is its success; and when it finally fails, as it must, there is nothing left to take its place. If Government could even now be made to "appreciate the political situation in all its bearings", and honestly face facts, it could not take long to discover that to-day coercion stands condemned as a dismal and ghastly failure. But there is yet a chance of retrieving a wellnigh hopeless situation, for the people of India are incredibly forgiving and kind-hearted.

4. For our part, we have already declared that from this day forward we shall not consider ourselves bound to carry out the

requirements contained in the orders issued to us under the Defence of India Act. But for the present we shall continue to reside in Chhindwara, and are willing to pay such reasonable rent for the house we occupy and the furniture therein as the Government may fix. Of course, we shall not hereafter trouble Government to provide any subsistence allowance which it has found so difficult to raise to an extent that could accord with our rank in life or even our restricted requirements.

5. We have had numerous enough occasions during our sojourn in this Province to feel dissatisfied with the manner in which your subordinate officials have dealt with us, and occasionally we have had to complain of it. This makes it all the more necessary that before we close this letter we should declare, as we now do, that on the only occasion on which we met you during our internment, viz., on March 24, last, we found you fair and sympathetic, and also appreciative of the forbearance we have so long shown. For this we offer our thanks.

We are,
Yours faithfully,
SHAUKAT ALI
MOHAMED ALI

The Hon'ble the Chief Commissioner,
Pachmarhi (C.P.)

Source :
Home-Department-July, 1919

50

LETTER FROM THE ALI BROTHERS TO THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER C.P. AND BERAR

(*Unpublished*)

With the Name of Allah
The Most Merciful and the Most Compassionate
Allah-U-Akbar

To

The Hon'ble the Chief Commissioner,
Central Provinces and Berar
(Through the District Magistrate of Betul)

Jail, Betul,
Central Provinces
Dated 4th November, 1919.

Sir,

As desired by you, we submit as briefly as possible the followin points on which we request the early decision of the Governor-General-in-Council—

(1) We submit that our detention, which has already lasted 4½ years, has been wholly undeserved, and that we should now be restored to full freedom. We have already submitted, on the 9th July last a very full representation to the Governor-General-in-Council through you; but no decision thereon has so far been communicated to us. We would not like to repeat the submission made therein; but we may submit that if our detention in jail is punitive, we should be given an open and fair trial by a properly constituted court of law

If, however, it is not punitive, we submit we should be informed on what event our release depends.

(2) If for any reason we are not to be restored to the fullest freedom just yet, we should be transferred to Rampur for the cotton season, after which we may be brought back here, so that we may earn something in the meantime for the maintenance of our families. If we are released later in the year when the cotton season is over, we shall have nothing on which to maintain them.

(3) Even if this is not for any reason possible, we should at least be allowed to visit our mother, whose health has broken down, and to remain with her till she gets well. At her time of life—she is 70—and in her present state of mind, the slightest ailment is naturally a source of grave anxiety. We therefore trust immediate permission will be accorded to us to proceed to Rampur.

(4) If we are not to be released just yet, not to be transferred to Rampur, our families should be permitted to reside at Betul and visit us at convenient intervals.

On account of our business as well as our mother's health, time is a great consideration to us just now. We therefore submit that reference may be made to the Governor-General-in-Council by wire, and his decision also communicated to us by wire; and in case we are permitted to proceed to Rampur, arrangements may be made here so that our departure is not delayed on account of delay in receiving the necessary sanction for payment of travelling expenses or on any other account.

We have the Honour to be
Sir
Your Most Obedient Servants,

SHAUKAT ALI
Servant of KA'BA

MOHAMED ALI
Servant of KA'BA

State Prisoners under Regulation III of 1918

Source :
Home Department January, 1920.

51

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO THE EDITOR OF THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN

To the Editor of the "*Manchester Guardian.*"

Sir,

The members of the Indian Caliphate Delegation have read with great interest Mr. Arnold Toynbee's letter in your issue of the 12th. Without entering here into any controversial matters arising out of his letter, may I say that my colleagues and I welcome Mr. Toynbee's suggestion of a personal discussion with him regarding what he is good enough to describe as our "very helpful proposal" for the appointment of an impartial Commission, on which Indian Muslims would be represented, and we are taking steps to bring about a meeting with him with a view to such a discussion.

Yours, etc.
MOHAMED ALI

Indian Khilafat Delegation,
Belgravia House,
41, Chester Square,
London, S.W.I. March 14.

Source :
Manchester Guardian March 16, 1920
Reproduced in the *Muslim Outlook*
on March 25, 1920.

52

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY HERALD

Sir,

Will you allow us, on behalf of the Mussalmans of India, to make a suggestion in your columns? It is, that an impartial Commission of Inquiry should proceed to investigate the whole question of responsibility as between Muslims and Armenians on the spot, even at this eleventh hour; and that representatives selected by the All-India Muslim League should form part of such a Commission. This would satisfy the Mussulmans, who have been amazed that no investigation into these occurrences has yet been held. The only investigation of which they have heard has been that of the Armenian reports by professed partisans of the Armenians for a merely propagandist purpose. Since the Armistice a number of reports, categorical and apparently well-authenticated, of atrocities committed by Armenians have been published showing that there is at least a case for the defence. It is not in accordance with the principles of justice to pronounce a verdict on the case for the prosecution alone.

On the Commission should be men acquainted with the laws of war and men acquainted with the peoples and languages of Anatolia. Special attention should be paid to the Russian intrigues with the Armenians and the Kurds, which were engineered from Tiflis previous to the war, and the events which took place in the *vilayets* of Van, Bitlis, and Erzeroum in February-March, 1915. The fact that no impartial international inquiry has been held into these matters since the armistice with Turkey has caused a painful impression in India. That and the withholding of the report of the inter-Allied Commisson of Inquiry into the events which accompanied the Greek occupation of Smyrna make Indian Mussulmans regard the Turks as victims of injustice. Let them not think there is no justice for the Muslim at the hands of Christian Powers. They cannot be

expected to repose confidence in, and accept the verdict of, purely Christian investigators. That is why we suggest that a certain number of Indian Muslims should be included in a Commission of Inquiry into the Armenian question, so that they should see for themselves that all is open and above-board.

MOHAMED ALI
Syed Hossain
Syed Sulaiman Nadvi
(Members of the Indian Khilafat Delegation.)

Source :
The Muslim Outlook, March 18, 1920

53

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

Sir,

I regret to have to say that the speech which I made at the Woking Mosque on Sunday afternoon has been summarised in a manner that makes it appear as if I held out threats, which is just what I did not. Knowing something of the difficulty of summarising within very restricted space long speeches on unfamiliar subjects, I can well sympathise with your correspondent. But it is unfortunate that in summarising my speech he has made the report in parts inaccurate, and generally rather misleading. I repeat what I said to Mr. Fisher, and more recently to Mr. Lloyd George, that we are here on a mission of peace and reconciliation, and not to hold out threats, and I think both these Ministers have acknowledged our moderation. The only threat that I did hold out was that Islam would certainly crush, by the weapons of truth and reason, those that may seek to crush it to-day with the weapons of temporal power just as it crushed those who sacked Baghdad in 1258, and the vanquished ultimately became the victor. It is the miracle of Islam that to-day Mussulmans all the world over are striving to preserve the Khilafat of the descendants of those very people that had in their own estimation finally crushed the Khilafat nearly seven centuries ago.

But while holding out no other threat than this, we are certainly here to convey to those that wield authority or influence the most serious warning that ever a body of men was charged with conveying, and it is not idle talk or bluff when we say that England could no longer count on the support of a single believing Muslim if a settlement with Turkey was made regardless of the most binding religious obligations of Mussulmans. Our loyalty has always been

strictly conditioned by regard for our faith, and it is because we are not disloyal, and do not wantonly desire to break away from England, that we have come all this way to state and explain our religious obligations, which we did to a large body of English Mussulmans, as well as others, at Woking may it be given to us to use the weapons of persuasion and reason wisely and well so as to help in restoring the sway of peace over mankind.-I am,

Yours faithfully,
MOHAMED ALI
Indian Khilafat Delegation

Source :
The Muslim Outlook, April 1, 1920

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LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE INDIAN KHILAFAT DELEGATION TO THE KHALIFA FROM PARIS

B-ismi'llah-ir-Rahman-ir-Raheem

Hotel Regina,
Paris
28th May, 1920 A.C.

May it please your Majesty,

The Indian Khilafat Delegation had the honour to address to Your Imperial Majesty on the 11th May a telegram in which we had endeavoured to explain in brief the mission which we had come to Europe on behalf of the 70 million Mussalmans of India and the 250 millions of our compatriots of other creeds, the nature of the claims that we had been charged to advocate in connection with the Khilafat and the Turkish settlement, and the state of feelings in India and the East generally respecting the same. We had also ventured to express the hope that Your Majesty and your noble and brave, but distracted and divided nation, would resolutely do your duty not only by Turkey but by Islam, and that the unity of Turkey would soon become a true reflex of the unity of Islam, which stood solidly by Your Majesty's side as it had never stood since the days of the earliest Khulafa.

To-day we beg leave to address Your Majesty in greater detail on some of the points briefly touched upon in that humble message, and the extreme gravity of the present situation for Islam is our only excuse for the importunity that may perhaps be detected in our repeated submission. For this we confidently trust Your Majesty will extend to us your fatherly forgiveness.

After sending the telegram of the 11th May to Your Majesty, we had occasion to meet a prominent and thoroughly disinterested journalist here to whom we gave a copy of that message, and we think it would interest Your Majesty to know what he said to us even before he had read it.

He told us that if he were the Sultan of Turkey to-day, he would forget that he was the ruler of the Ottoman Empire and the head of the Ottoman nation, and only remember that he was the Successor of our Holy Prophet (on whom be God's peace and benedictions) and the Commander of the Faithful, and as such the Servant of the Holy Places and the mandatory of Allah for the Sanctuaries of Islam. He said he would like to appeal to-day not only to the Turks, much less only to the small body of people that are in Constantinople, but to the entire Moslem World without distinction of race and country and political sovereignty, and that he would appeal not so much to the brain as to the heart of Islam. If he were the Khalifa to-day, he said, he would make all Islam weep and pray to Allah and seek strength and support in the spiritual awakening thus effected, rather than waste his time and energies in futile negotiations with people sunk in gross materialism, to whom neither reason nor sentiment appeals which their immediate interests are concerned. In short, he would stand forth, as no previous Sultan of Turkey had stood forth, as the Champion of the Faith and the Vicegerent of Allah on earth, untrammelled by diplomatic conventions and political artificialities.

This friend of our cause did not know when he gave expression to these ideas that our own humble submission to Your Majesty were directed to the same end. But having received confirmation of them from such an unexpected quarter, we now feel that we should repeat those submissions with as much emphasis as is compatible with our profound esteem and veneration for Your Majesty. Islam and not Turkey alone should be the object of our united defence. If the Turks too lay greater stress upon the obvious danger arising from the dismemberment of the temporal power of Islam, and its reduction to an extent imperilling its spiritual freedom, than they do upon the evils resulting from the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, which must be the natural concern of every Turk to-day, then, not only will the dismemberment of that Empire be prevented as the first fruit of our combined efforts, but Islam itself will be secured against the menace of strangulation and death which this infamous

treaty, if signed, is expected to spell for it. If, on the contrary, greater emphasis is placed on the necessity of saving Thrace and Smyrna, or the Armenian *Vilayet*, then we fear even that result may not be achieved, while it may involve the surrender of larger claims and to a Mussalman infinitely more important principles. Not unoften in the affairs of mankind small things have proved the enemy of big things, and the reduction of one legitimate claim, in the hope of placing the adversary and inducing him to be more just and reasonable than he is inclined to be, has many a time produced results quite the contrary of those desired and expected.

The Khalifa is the repository of the sacred Traditions of our Prophet, and as Your Majesty is aware, according to the most authentic reports, he commanded the Mussalmans on his death-bed not to permit or tolerate any sort or kind of non-Moslem control over any portion of the Jazeerat-ul-Arab, which includes Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia as well as the region known to European geographers as the peninsula of Arabia. No Mussalman can therefore agree to the exercise of any control by mandatories of the powers in Syria, Palestine or Mesopotamia, and what no Mussalman can submit to consistently with his creed, the Successor of our Prophet can submit to still less. The Arabs themselves have protested against all mandates and protectorates in these regions, so that even the principle of self-determination cannot now be invoked with any success by our political adversaries. In fact, when we discussed this question with some representative Arabs, they readily admitted our well-established contention that, even if they were to determine otherwise, their self-determination in favour of non-Moslem mandates or any other form of control could not be binding on the Mussalmans of the world in clear defiance of the *shari'at* and that obviously the Jazeerat-ul-Arab is not the private property of the Arabs, any more than it is of the Turks, to give away or to retain, but the common heritage of Islam, and subject to the wardenship of the entire Moslem world as a divine trust.

We may mention here that we had clearly stated in our Address to the Viceroy in India that even if the Turks could be made to acquiesce in a settlement of this kind in contravention of the Prophet's death-bed injunction, it would remain as unacceptable as ever to every believing Mussalman.

Turkey cannot, therefore, undertake, consistently with the obligations imposed by Islam, to accept whatever decisions the Allied

Powers may be placed to take with regard to Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia, any more than she can accept them with regard to the Hejaz or any other portion of the peninsula of Arabia. Nor can Your Majesty renounce in their favour all the rights and titles that Turkey ever claimed over these territories, including those which belong to Your Majesty in virtue of the Khilafat, or undertake to recognise or conform to any and every measure which may be taken, now or hereafter, by the Allies in and concerning these regions. It is obvious that such demands can be accepted only if Your Majesty is prepared to renounce the Khilafat itself, and thus reverse the act of cession, after four long centuries, which enabled Your Majesty's great ancestor, Sultan Salim I, to be recognised by the Moslem world as Khalifat-ur-Rasul and Ameer-ul-Momineen.

We feel it our duty to submit that Indian Mussalmans, who have always accepted the rulers of the Ottoman Empire as Khulafa and Commanders of the Faithful without doubt or dispute, are as strong and unwavering supporters of Your Majesty's title to the Khilafat as of any of your long and distinguished predecessors, and that, while earnestly desirous of strengthening the bond which the Khilafat was designed to create and maintain, they will deplore as one of the greatest misfortunes that could befall Islam if anything was permitted to affect Your Majesty's title to it.

After the foregoing submissions, we need hardly trouble Your Majesty with any further appeal against the renunciation of Your Majesty's undisputed and indisputable jurisdiction over all Mussalmans irrespective of the consideration whether they are your own subjects or happen to be subject to the sovereignty or protectorate of another State. The renunciation of such jurisdiction is the direct renunciation of the Khilafat itself, and neither argument nor appeal is necessary to recommend the categorical and summary rejection of such an unconscionable demand from the Khalifa after innumerable protestations that the war would involve no religious question, and the Khilafat was a subject on which the Mussalmans alone were competent to take a decision.

We may, however, state that we have ventured to place the question of the Jazeerat-ul-Arab in the fore-front of our humble submission not because we are unmindful of other equally unconscionable demands that have been made in the draft Treaty, but because it seemed to us just possible that the importance of the inviolability of

the Khilafat might not always be kept in view in the present distracted condition of the ill-fated Turkish nation. But even if we had been inclined to ignore the legitimate requirements of the Turks as a nation, which we could not have done consistently with the claims of our Islamic Brotherhood, the needs of the Khilafat itself would have compelled us to offer, as we are prepared to do every support to Turkey in her vigorous protests against the rest of the provisions of the Draft Treaty. They manifestly seek to deprive you, in spite of the most solemn and repeated pledges of the Allied Powers, of your homelands in Thrace and Asia Minor; they would place your capital at the mercy of your traditional foes, and even then subject to, and, in fact, Your Majesty also, to Allied control, they would rob you for all practical purposes of every kind of resource, financial as well as military, naval and aerial, and, in short, leave you no vestige of independence even as a sovereign State. It does not, however, seem necessary to go into these provisions at any further length, because they are and must be as unacceptable to every patriotic Turk as they are and must be to every believing Mussalman. The Khalifa to be a Khalifa must be independent, and must possess temporal power adequate in existing circumstances for the defence of the faith. But if this Treaty, or, in fact, any treaty like this, is signed, it is clear that Your Majesty will have neither independence nor temporal power left, and lacking these essential qualifications for the Khilafat, Your Majesty will soon cease to be recognised as Khalifa. Already some Arabs have been encouraged to question your title, though they themselves lack these essential qualifications, and cannot therefore be recognised as Khulafa. But the purpose of those who are opposed to the very existence of the Khilafat, which insists on what they consider to be divided allegiance, but which really demands allegiance to God before allegiance to any earthly government, Moslem or non-Moslem, will be served all the better if no Moslem ruler remains qualified for the office of Khalifa, and the Faithful are left without a Commander.

If, however, Your Majesty rejects this Treaty in your capacity as a Khalifa, for the obvious reason that its provisions are calculated to destroy the Khilafat and contravene the commandments of Islam, the Moslem World would *ipso facto* be bound to rally to Your Majesty's support, and assist you to the fullest extent of its power, in your efforts to retain your independence and temporal power adequate for the defence of its faith.

As we have already said in our telegram, everything depends upon the kind of response that Your Majesty makes to the iniquitous and impossible demands made in the name of the Allies, and we hope we may suggest without disrespect, that Your Majesty's decision will be the most momentous ever taken by a Sultan of Turkey since Sultan Selim of glorious memory became a Khalifa four hundred years ago. For on Your Majestry's decision will depend the continuance of the Khilafat in his line, and also the uninterrupted and undisputed succession to the Khilafat which has so long been maintained.

But if Your Majesty's decision is what we all confidently expect it to be, you may rest assured of our loyal and hearty support. We have already indicated in our telegram that we in India cannot be satisfied if our claim is reduced by a hair's breadth. We demand that Your Majesty must retain all the temporal power that was your when hostilities broke out in November, 1914, and that the territorial *status quo ante bellum* must be restored. We also demand that Your Majesty must continue to be the Servant of the Holy Places as heretofore, and, finally that there must be no sort or kind of non-Moslem control in any portion of the Jazeerat-ul-Arab, which includes not only the peninsula of Arabia, but also Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia. If these claims are not fully statisfied, it would be futile to expect peace and contentment in India, or the continuance of our undoubled loyalty which has been the mainstay of British rule throughout its history. In that event, the people of India, without distinction of creed and community, have decided to cease all cooperation with Government.

Mr. Gandhi, who had so valiantly and resolutely resisted the encroachments of the South African Government on the liberties of the Indians in that part of the Empire, and achieved such signal success without the use of any violence, is one of the chief leaders of the movement for the defence of the Khilafat in India, and he and other great Hindu leaders have agreed upon a programme of progressive cessation of co-operation, and the Mussalmans have decided to work this programme to the end.

The first stage is one that is calculated to bring moral pressure upon Government by the renunciation of titles and decorations conferred upon Indians by the Government, and by resignation of all honorary offices and membership of Legislative Councils. This has already begun, and some frank statements of the reasons for this step

being taken have been sent to the Government. But it is clear that those who hunt for titles cannot be expected to join with true patriots in large numbers.

In the next stage, the civil employees of Government will resign their posts, and since most of the work is done by Indians themselves, this is bound to affect the policy of Government and at the very least make it inclined to be less hostile to Islam than it is today. In the third stage, the Army and the Police Force will resign, and if even then the hostility of the Government continues, the last stage will be reached, and people will refuse to pay the taxes.

In the event of the failure of this movement of progressive cessation of co-operation, the Mussalmans have reserved to themselves the right to take such further action as the law of Islam permits and Government has been repeatedly informed that the only alternatives open to Mussalman in such circumstances are *Jehad* and *Hijrat*.

But so exasperated are the Mussalmans that some members of the police force have already sent in their resignations, and have openly stated that they could no longer serve the Government to which they had been so loyal in the past without jeopardising their eternal salvation, and it may reasonably be inferred that the Mussalmans in the Army, when they see the sacrifices their brothers in civil life are making, will not place their loyalty to Government above their loyalty to God.

Another factor of great importance in the present situation is that some Mussalmans have already migrated from India, and we enclose for Your Majesty's information the speech of His Majesty the Ameer of Afghanistan in which he fully approves of our efforts for the Khilafat, and offers his support for the defence of the Khilafat, and promises to give asylum to all the *Muhajireen* from India. His Majesty's Foreign Minister, who is at the head of the Afghan Delegation carrying on negotiations with the Indian Government, had already announced this, and now his august master himself confirms that announcement in the most explicit manner. His Majesty is an undoubted *Mujahid*, whose support of the Khilafat can be fully relied upon, and from his speech it appears that the newly liberated Moslem States of Central Asia will also stand by him in such endeavour. Further, it may be pointed out that the disaffection and intranquillity among the tribes on the North-Western border of India, which have lasted much longer than on any pre-

vious occasion, and have absorbed the energies and efforts of an unprecedentedly large force, are due to a very large extent to the hostility of the Government towards the Khilafat. In short, there prevails in India and in neighbouring countries a state of feeling for the Khilafat and its preservation so intense and widespread as has never prevailed for any object for many centuries, and we may safely say that other Moslem lands such as Tunis, Algeria, Morocco and Egypt, and by no means excluding Arabia itself, will support the Khilafat no less in its defence of Islam. In these circumstances, we submit we were justified in assuring Your Majesty that Islam stood by your side as it had never stood since the last of the Khulafa-i-Rashideen passed away.

The unfortunate neglect in the past of the duties imposed and the work demanded by the Khilafat has brought the Moslem world to its present deplorable condition, and if we in the present generation also will not make one last and combined effort to retrieve the situation, our children and our children's children will grow up only to curse us and our inglorious memory, and when we march out of our graves on the Day of Judgement to answer for our acts and our omissions, we shall not be able to face Allah and His Prophet whose great trust we shall have so ignomihiously betrayed.

We cannot but deplore and condemn the separatist tendencies discernible in some parts of the Moslem World, which are undoubtedly subversive of the Brotherhood of Islam and in direct contravention of its teaching and its very spirit. But when we complain of this, we are told that the Turks have themselves to thank for this state of affairs, that their whole outlook at best is national, and that they care little for the Khilafat or for Islam. Non-Moslem critics of and authority also have begun to ask what the Khalifa himself has position done for the Khilafat during the last century or two. Of course, such complaints and criticisms are neither sincere nor disinterested, and besides exaggerating the errors of the past, and taking a wholly one -sided view of the matter, they disregard and altogether ignore the distractions of the Turks for so many generations, and show little appreciation of courage and sacrifices of a noble and brave nation. Nevertheless, it is difficult to silence these critics, and it would be fatal not to confess even to ourselves such truth as there is in these complaints and criticism.

Certainly the Khilafat was always meant to be something higher and greater than merely national sovereignty. And although it is

absured to suggest, as some of the most influential people in Allied Countries are suggesting, that the Khalifa is like the Pope who could be "Vaticanised", and that apparently the Khalifa's sole function in life is to live in retirement like a monk or an anchorite, mumbling his prayers and repeating his beads, it cannot be denied that in the last few generations at least the Khulafa have not asserted themselves as such, and have generally appeared before the world only as Sultans and Padshahs. They were undoubtedly expected to go on the pilgrimage to the Hejaz in person every two or three years, if not, annually, and to make of the Haj a universal Conference of the Islamic World in which its affairs could be discussed in accordance with the divine injunction "*wa shavirhum fi-l-amr*;" they were expected to interest themselves in the progress of Mussalmans in every country, and to assert themselves constantly in checking the abuses which were undermining the strength of Islam, and in promoting the welfare of the Moslems and the advancement of the Mission of Islam.

But all this is so obvious, and no one is likely to know it so well as Your Majesty yourself, who have inherited the awful consequences of the neglect of your predecessors. Our only object in referring to it is to explain that, because for centuries past the work of the Khilafat was done indifferently, the Mussalmans, who never neglected to remember the Khalifa in their prayers, failed nevertheless to come to his aid in the hour of his need, and made but a poor response to his call. They have, however, realised only too well now, after repeated misfortunes and humiliations, that things cannot be left as they are, and that the bonds of the Khilafat must be strengthened at all costs. Therefore, while, on the one hand, they confidently expect that Your Majesty will rise in this the gravest crisis of Islam to the full height of the Khulafa-i-Rashideen, they are, on the other hand, themselves prepared also to obey Your Majesty implicitly and to make every sacrifice in obeying your call.

And it will not be out of place to submit that now as ever unity is the greatest need of Islam. Honest differences of opinion must always be tolerated. But only Your Majesty can teach the Mussalmans to-day that to make of one's opinions a fetish, and to be relentless in the pursuit of those who hold different opinions, even when a still more relentless enemy of both is in close pursuit of all without any distinction of persons and parties, is the greatest betrayal of Turkey and of Islam. The need of reuniting all Moslems,

specially such as may be disposed to be divided by discord or distrust one from another, within the fold of the true Brotherhood of Islam, is in fact, now greater than ever before, and we fervently pray that Your Majesty may exert yourself in that behalf. And in particular, any misunderstandings that still remain and divide Arab from Turk should be carefully removed. In fact, this is the very moment when all sects and sections of Islam can be welded together, and we have no doubt that Your Majesty must have been deeply touched as are ourselves at the demonstration of the sympathy and support of our Shiah brothers, who realise that the dismemberment of the Khilafat in the present circumstances means the dismemberment of Islam itself. As for the invaluable support given to us by our Hindu brethren, and in fact by all communities of India without any distinction, words fail us to express our appreciation of it, and the only way in which we can demonstrate our gratitude is to pray that we may not disgrace Islam when the time comes to make every sacrifice for the liberation of our Motherland. We have assured our compatriots that we can never think of the subjugation of India to any alien power, Moslem or non-Moslem, and that they will find us at their side in winning Indian autonomy.

We now ask forgiveness of Your Imperial Majesty for the length of this appeal, which is the result of the fullness of the heart and of the grave apprehensions to which every Moslem is a prey to-day. But before we close this humble representation, let us once more assure you, Sire, that you have lying at your feet to-day such vast stores of love and esteem, of affection and reverence as the greatest king in the world may well envy, and it is for you to accept them and make use of them, or spurn them and deem them of less value than the tiny doles of bare justice that may grudgingly be given to you by others with all the show of generous charity. If it had been possible for us to reach the Dar-us-Sa'adat and to touch Your Majesty's feet, we would have begged and beseeched and implored you to make your choice not as the Padshah of Ottoman Turks but as the Captain of Allah's Army of the Moslems of every colour, and as the Successor of the Chief of all Creation and the last Prophet of God; and we feel certain that with our tears we would have won from you the only answer that patriotism and faith alike demand. But since that is not to be, we have chosen as our great *Elchi* one who must be even dearer to you than we, your spiritual children, for she is the flesh of your flesh and the bone of your bone. Much is

lost of Islam, but its womanhood retains its pristine purity and the readiness to sympathise and suffer with every suffering soul. It is one of these noble women that we have chosen to appeal to Your Majesty in the name of your distant children whom common peril has drawn close to you. She will, we confidently trust, plead their cause as no mother or wife ever pleaded for a son or a husband whose life had been declared forfeit to the Padshah's stern justice, for she is to plead not for the life of a condemned criminal, but for the life of the Khilafat and of Islam. And we hereby charge her in the name of the Allah she worships and the Prophet she would please not to give up the advocacy of our cause till victory is won. May Allah give her the eloquence and the persuasion that bind a spell over human hearts and work miracles. May it be given to her to plead as she has never pleaded before, and to win a victory as woman never won in the whole history of the human race.

With every good wish for your Majesty, for Turkey and for Islam, and with the expression of our homage and devotion, we subscribe ourselves,

Your Majesty's dutiful and loving,
Children
(Sd.) MOHAMED ALI
(Sd.) SYUD HOSSAIN[1]
(Sd.) SYED SULAIMAN NADWI[2]; and
(Sd.) ABUL KASIM
(of the Indian Khilafat Delegation)

1. Syed Husain was a nationalist and editor of the *Independent*.
2. Saiyed Sulaiman Nadvi (1884-1953) belonged to a family of religious scholars. He was educated at Nadva and joined Dar-ul-Musanfin founded by Allama Shibli. He took to writing on Islam. His books have been translated in Turkish, Arabic and English. He supported the Khilafat movement and was one of the member of the Khilafat Delegation. He was conferred the Degree of LL.D. in 1940.

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LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE INDIAN KHILAFAT DELEGATION TO THE PRIME MINISTER OF ENGLAND

With the name of Allah, the Most Merciful and the Most Compassionate,

Hotel Wagram, Rue de Rivoli,
Paris, July 10, 1920

To the Rt. Hon. David Lloyd George, Prime Minister.

Sir,—On March 19 last, in the course of their interview with you, the Indian Khilafat Delegation had the honour to submit for yonr consideration and that of His Majesty's Government, the views and sentiments of the Indian people in regard to the future of the Khilafat and the proposed settlement of peace with Turkey. We took occasion, in accordance with our mandate, to lay before you fully the binding religious obligations of Mussulmans with regard to the preservation of the Khilafat and cognate questions which, as we submitted, should be respected in any proposals which His Majesty's Government and their Allies might formulate for concluding a lasting peace with the Government of His Majesty the Sultan, the Khalifa of Islam.

Among other things, we hope we made it very clear that the two fundamental requirements of the Muslim faith in this matter are the preservation of the territorial integrity and political independence of the Empire of the Khalifa and the inviolability of the Jezirat-ul-Arab, the Holy Land of Islam. We indicated that, while our people were not opposed to such political changes, in accordance with the understanding on the basis of which the Armistice with Turkey was

concluded, as would guarantee autonomous government to the non-Turkish nationalities within the Ottoman Empire, without prejudice to the status and dignity of Turkey as a Sovereign Power, the fabric of the Ottoman Empire itself, the dismemberment of which would involve the destruction of the Khilafat, should be maintained intact.

From the reply that you made to the Delegation, it was clear that you were out of sympathy with the viewpoint of Mussulmans, and of the people of India generally, which the Delegation had put before you, and that you were out of accord with the suggestions and proposals that we had submitted. There were also statements of facts in your reply to which the Delegation demurred, and on which we would have been glad to join issue with you had occasion been offered. But as the conditions of the interview did not permit of this, the Delegation have since called into question, in the public Press and otherwise, such of your statements as did not appear to be well-founded. We have also been in correspondence with your Private Secretary, with a view to obtain the necessary confirmation of the authenticity of the figures of population, etc., on which you appeared to rely in the observations you made to the Delegation. But so far our efforts have led to no satisfactory results, and the information repeatedly applied for has not been forthcoming.

Since you granted the interview to the Delegation, the text of the proposed Peace Treaty with Turkey has been handed to the Plenipotentiaries of the Turkish Government in Paris. Certain observations on the same have also been handed to the Allies by His Highness Damad Ferid Pasha, the Grand Vizier of Turkey, over his sole signature.

The Delegation have carefully examined both these documents, and feel it their duty to submit the following observations on the same for the consideration of His Majesty's Government and their Allies.

We need hardly emphasise at this stage that the Turkish Peace Settlement, vitally affecting as it does the entire future of the Khilafat and of the Jezirat-ul-Arab, is a question in which the Mussulmans of India are as deeply concerned as the Turks and the Arabs themselves. We may recall here that the Deputation that had waited upon the Viceroy at Delhi on January 19 last, with a view to ask for necessary arrangements being made for the Delegation to proceed to

Europe and America, had in unmistakable language stated in the address it presented to His Excellency, that even, if the Ottoman Turks could be made to acquiesce in a settlement such as has since been proposed, "it would remain as unacceptable as ever to every believing Mussulman."

After a careful examination of the provisions of the proposed Treaty of Peace with Turkey, the Delegation have no hesitation in declaring that it is one which in its implied intention and effect must directly violate the Muslim conscience. Moreover, we are convinced that it cannot fail to be equally repugnant to our non-Muslim compatriots in India as a whole, who, as you are aware, are identified wholeheartedly on this question with their Muslim fellow countrymen for the reason already indicated, as well as on account of its general character, which is inequitable and harsh.

It is with profound regret that the Delegation observe that the considerations which they placed before you in the interview of March 19 last, including a statement of the solemn and indefeasible religious obligations of Mussulmans in regard to the Khilafat and the Jazirat-ul-Arab, have been ignored and flouted in this Treaty. They cannot but deplore that His Majesty's Government should have set such little store by the rights of conscience and requirements of faith of one hundred million loyal Muslim subjects of His Majesty as is evidenced by the Articles, and indeed the whole tenor, of the Treaty which was presented to the Turkish Plenipotentiaries on behalf of Great Britain and her Allies.

Irrespective of what the Turks may or may not do, the Delegation must point out that the Treaty under reference is, and must remain, unacceptable to those whom they have the honour to represent. The Mussulmans of India have no option but to declare their unhesitating and unconditional rejection of the present Treaty as it stands, and we beg leave to draw your attention and that of His Majesty's Government specifically to some of those Articles of it which run counter to and directly contravene the obligations and requirements of the Islamic faith.

We would first cite Article 139 of the Treaty, which runs as follows :—

> "Turkey renounces formally all rights of suzerainty or jurisdiction of any kind over Muslims who are subject to the sovereignty or protectorate of any other State. No power

> shall be exercised directly or indirectly by any Turkish authority whatever in any Territory detached from Turkey or of which the existing status is recognised by Turkey under the present Treaty."

It is obvious that Turkey has, and could have, no "rights of suzerainty or jurisdiction" over Mussulmans who are not her subjects; but it is equally obvious that the Sultan of Turkey as Khalifa has, and must continue to have, so long as he holds that office, his very considerable "jurisdiction" over Muslims who are "subject to the sovereignty or protectorate of any other State." The law of Islam clearly prescribes the character and extent of the "jurisdiction" pertaining to the office of Khalifa, and we cannot but protest most emphatically against this indirect, but none the less palpable, attempt on the part of Great Britain and her Allies to force on the Khalifa a surrender of such "jurisdiction," which must involve the abdication of the Khilafat. The proposal, we are constrained to say, constitutes a grave and intolerable encroachment on the fundamental religious cannons of Islam. And, we may observe, it is all the more astonishing in view of the fact that His Majesty's Government have repeatedly declared that the question of the Khilafat was one for Mussulmans alone to deal with and decide.

Similarly, Article 121 of the Treaty which lays down that :—

> "Turkey definitely renounces all rights and privileges, which, under the Treaty of Lausanne of October 12, 1912, were left to the Sultan in Libya."

infringes rights pertaining to the Sultan as Khalifa which had been specifically safeguarded and reserved under the said Treaty of Lausanne.

In the course of our interview with you on March 19 last, we had also formally intimated, in accordance with our instructions, that any form of non-Muslim control over the Jezirat-ul-Arab, the Holy Land of Islam, which includes Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia, was, according to Islamic Law, absolutely ruled out, and consequently non-Muslim domination of these regions, whether in the shape of "mandates" or otherwise, could never be acceptable to Mussulmans. This categorical and inalienable requirement of the Muslim faith, supported as it is by the unbroken practice of over 1,300 years, is also, we find, totally disgarded by Articles 94 to 97 of the Peace Treaty, read in conjunction with Articles 22 and 132.

The Prophet's deathbed injunction makes the Mussulmans themselves the mandatories in these sacred regions, and they have a right to expect from Great Britain and her Allies a clear recognition in the Treaty of "the sacred character attributed by Muslims of all countries" and respect for the "precepts of the law of the Quran" not only with regard to Mecca and Medina and the pious foundations established there, which is already embodied in Article 99, but with regard to the entire area of the Jezirat-ul-Arab, the sanctity of which is equally widely acknowledged and equally firmly based on similar religious precepts. To require the Successor of the selfsame Prophet who gave to the Mussulmans a mandate for these sacred regions, to accept the doctrine of other mandates for them in direct contravention of this, and in advance "to accept any decision that may be taken" in relation to questions concerning these regions, to renounce "in favour of the Principal Allied Powers all rights and titles which he could claim on any ground over or concerning these territories" and "recognise and conform to the measures which may be taken now or in the future by the Principal Allied Powers......in order to carry the above stipulation into effect," is an intolerable outrage not only on his conscience, but on the conscience of every Mussulman.

Apart from the above religious consideration, which, after all, must be the governing consideration in this matter for all Mussulmans the proposed mandates run counter to the doctrine of self-determination on which you seemed to lay so much emphasis in the course of the Delegation's interview with you. We may recall that on that occasion, when the Delegation suggested that Mussulmans could well be left to adjust the Arabs' claim to independence with the scheme of the Ottoman Empire and the Khilafat, you had stated that "the Arabs have claimed independence; they have proclaimed Feisul King of Syria; they have claimed that they should be severed from Turkish dominion; is it suggested that the Arabs should remain under Turkish dominion merely because they are Mahomedans?" We would take the liberty to remind you that if the Arabs, who are an overwhelmingly large majority in these regions, have claimed independence, they have clearly claimed it free from the incubus of so-called mandates, and their claim to be severed from Turkish dominion is emphatically not a claim to be subjected to the "advice and assistance" of a mandatory of the Principal Allied Powers. If the principle of self-determination

is to be applied at all, it must be applied regardless of the wishes and interests of foreign Powers covetously seeking to exploit regions and peoples exposed to the danger of foreign domination on account of their unprotected character. The Arab Congresses have unequivocally declared that they want neither protectorates nor mandates, nor any other form of political or economic control; and the Delegation, while reiterating their view that an amicable adjustment of Arab and Turkish claims by the Muslims themselves in accordance with Islamic Law, is perfectly feasible, must support the Arab demand for complete freedom from the control of mandatories appointed by the Allies.

We must, however, made it clear once more, that our views are based on the eternal and immutable principles of Islam, and are held by us irrespective of the views that may be held at a particular time by the Arabs inhabiting these regions, which are not merely the home of the Arabs, but form the sacred trust and common heritage of all Mussulmans.

With regard to Palestine in particular, the Delegation desire to state that Article 99, embodying the Declaration the British Government of November 2, 1917, is extremely vague, and it is not clear in what relation the so-called national home for the Jewish people, which is proposed to be established in Palestine, would stand to the State proposed to be established there. The Mussulmans of the world are not ashamed of their dealings with their Jewish neighbours, and can challenge a comparison with others in this respect; and the Delegation in the course of the interview with you endeavoured to make it clear that there was every likelihood of all reasonable claims of Jews in search of a home being accepted by the Muslim Government of Palestine. But if the very small Jewish minority in Palestine is intended to exercise over the Muslims, who constitute four-fifths of the population, a dominance, now or in the future when its members have swelled after immigration, then the Delegation must categorically and emphatically oppose any such designs.

With regard to the Hedjaz, Article 98, which requires Turkey, not only to recognise it as a free and independent State, but to renounce all rights and titles there, and Article 99, which makes no mention of the rights and prerogatives of the Khalifa as Servant of the Holy Places, are, and must ever be equally unacceptable to the Muslim world. As the Delegation, in the course of their interview with you, have already emphasised, the Khalifa is the Servant of the

Holy Places and must ever remain its Warden, and any attempt to alter his status or restrict his rights and prerogatives in the *harems* of Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem would never be tolerated by the Mussulmans of the world.

Moreover, we would point out that Article 100 requires to be thoroughly elucidated. Is it intended, for instance, that "the complete equality of treatment" which is sought to be "assured in the territory of the Hedjaz to persons ... of nationals of any other of the Allied Power" will abrogate the well-known and recognised practice "In accordance with the precepts of the law of the Quran," of excluding non-Muslims from the prohibited areas. If so, any such encroaçhment must be opposed by all Mussulmans.

In the foregoing paragraphs, we have dealt with such Articles of the Draft Treaty as directly contravene the requirements of Islamic law. But no less unacceptable to us and to those whom we have the honour to represent are the numerous Articles that are calculated, singly or in their cumulative effect, to undermine the independence and the temporal power of the Khilafat, conditions which are indispensable to its continued existence as the most essential institution of Islam."

In your interview with the Delegation you had referred to the fierce controversy which had raged for over a generation as to the temporal power of the Roman Catholic Church, and to sincere, earnest and zealous Mussulmans who took a very different view of the temporal power of the Khilafat from the one which the Delegation was charged to explain to you, and you were disinclined to enter into a discussion "where men of the same faith take a different view'" We are not aware to what school of "sincere, earnest and zealous Mussulmans" you were referring, for although Islam, like other faiths, has a number of sects, we are not aware of any that does not consider the temporal power to be of the very essence of the Khilafat. The Government of India have already received long and detailed juridical declarations of the Ulama in India, which must, we imagine, preclude any misunderstanding on the subject, and no analogies from other creeds can serve any purpose save that of clouding and befogging the clearest of issues.

In full accordance with this clear statement, the Manifesto that the All-India Khilafat Conference issued last February in its Bombay session, which forms the mandate of the Delegation, declared that

"the claim regarding the Khilafat consists in leaving the Turkish Empire as it was at the time of the outbreak of the War, except that, although the allegations of Turkish misrule are not admitted, the non-Turkish nationalities may, if they so desire, be guaranteed autonomous government within the Ottoman Empire, consistently with the dignity of a sovereign State." This is the claim that we must still continue to press, and in the words of this Manifesto, "a reduction of the Muslim claim by a hair's breadth will not only be a violation of the deepest religious feelings of the Muslims, but will also be a flagrant violation of the solemn and relevant declarations and pledges made or given by responsible statesmen representing the Allied and Associated Powers and given at a time when they were desirous of enlisting the support of the Muslim people and soldiery."

In the course of the Delegation's interview with you, you were good enough to say that His Majesty's Government recognised that "the Muslims of India have a right to be heard in a matter which affects especially Islam," and you went on to say that His Majesty's Government had heard them, and not merely heard them, but "had very largely deferred to their wishes in the matter," and that "the settlement was very largely affected by the opinion of India and especially the Mussulmans of India." Presumably you were referring on that occasion to the proposed retention of Constantinople by the Turks as the capital of their Empire. In this connection we desire to recall that the pledge which you gave on January 5, 1918, and which you recognised in the course of the Constantinople debate in the House of Commons on February 26, 1920, as having been deliberately given, after full consultation with all parties, with their consent, and as a national pledge, carefully prepared, specific and unqualified, covered not only Constantinople, but also "the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace," which you acknowledged to be "predominantly Turkish in race."

But it is clear that in the Treaty Turkey does not in any real sense retain even Constantinople. With a bodyguard of the Sultan, 700 in number, to defend it against His Majesty's enemies, when it is within range of their guns, its defencelessness is obvious; and, from your own statements in the House of Commons, it is equally obvious that it is to be kept defenceless by design. Moreover, the multiplicity of controls provided in various Articles of the Treaty for the Zone of the Straits, which includes the whole of this small Turkish enclave, and over the armed forces of Turkey generally, robs the

Sultan of all sovereign rights in his own capital, and makes it nothing more than a prison in which the Head of the Muslim world would be kept as a hostage of the Principal Allied Powers. We have already protested against the occupation of Constantinople by British armed forces in circumstances of the greatest injustice, illegality and cruel violence, and it does not seem necessary for us to remind you that of all the "enemy Powers" Turkey alone has been singled out for this form of unjustifiable coercion that is without parallel. This certainly does not demonstrate deference to Muslim wishes, but, on the contrary, suggests that discrimination has been exercised against the only Muslim Power that was ranged against the Allies in the war.

But in the case of Thrace and Smyrna, even the semblance of their retention by the Turks has been discarded. In this connection the position to-day cannot be expressed better than in your own words. In the course of your speech in the House of Commons on February 26, 1920, you had declared with reference to your pledge of January 5, 1918, that "the Mahomedan population of India were disturbed and they wanted a reassurance. We were making a special effort here to procure output for the War, and we were making a special effort in India to secure recruits. We needed all the men we could get for France, and what happended two or three months afterwards showed how important it was that we should secure all the support we could get in the East to do the fighting in Turkey. What is the effect of that statement ? The effect of that statement in India was that recruiting went up appreciably from that very moment. They were not all Mahomedans, but there were Mahomedans amongst them. It is too often forgotten that we are the greatest Mahomedan Power in the world. One-fourth of the population of the British Empire is Mahomedan. There have been no more loyal adherents to the Throne, there has been no more effective loyal support to the Empire in its hour of trial than came from the Mahomedans of India. We gave a solemn pledge and they accepted it, and they are disturbed at the prospect of our not abiding by it... India voluntarily sent to our aid 1,160,000 men who enlisted during the War; taking those who enlisted during the War and before it, very nearly a million and a half. We could not have conquered Turkey without their help. We had not the necessary troops. There were Mahomedan divisions that fought brilliantly throughout the whole of that Turkish campaign. Without their aid we should not

have conquered Turkey at all. Were we to have broken faith with them in the hour of victory? That is what we were confronted with. We might go to them and say 'The circumstance have changed.'... You might have said so, but I will tell you what they might have said. Whenever the British word was given again in the East, they would have said, 'Yes, you mean to keep faith, but you will always, somehow or other, find an unanswerable reason when the time comes for breaking it.' There is nothing which would damage British power in Asia more than the feeling that you could not trust the British word. That is the danger. Of course, it would be a fatal reputation for us." The danger to which you referred on that occasion not only exists to-day, but exists in a greater measure than before, and we would, therefore, respectfully urge that if the "fatal reputation" you then desired to avoid must still be avoided, His Majesty's Government and their Allies must retrace their steps, and permit the Turks to retain within their dominion, not only Constantinople as a free capital of their Empire, but also "the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace, which are predominantly Turkish in race."

In your interview with the Delegation, while stating that "it was difficult to get the facts about Thrace," you had said that you had the Turkish census and the Greek census before you, that there was very little difference between them, and that, according to both, "the Muslim population in Thrace was in a considerable minority"; and you went on to say that "if that is true, and the principle of self-determination is to be applied, the whole of Thrace would certainly be taken away from Turkish rule." In this connection, we must, in the first place, point out that there was no suggestion in your speech only three weeks before of any doubt that the population of Thrace and Asia Minor were not still "predominantly Turkish in race." In the next place, we do not know how there could be a Greek census of territory still Turkish, and the only Turkish census from which your Secretary quoted figures was taken not only for Turkish Thrace but, as he himself stated, also for "that part of Bulgarian Thrace coded to the Allies by the Treaty of Neuilly," and was taken as long as a quarter of a century ago. Since then, as everybody knows, enormous fluctuations in population have more than once occurred, and it is the Turkish element that has increased on account of immigration from violated Macedonia. It is true that Mr. Kerr also quoted figures according to "the best estimate which

the Foreign Office could make"; but he has refused to supply us with any information on the sources of this estimate, and respecting his statements about Greek evictions and deportations, which could enable us to judge of their accuracy. We submit we are, at any rate, entitled to know on what grounds the figures on which your pledge of January 5, 1918, was based, have since been discarded. If to-day, when the Turks are threatened with War, and there is danger of Great Britain acquiring, in your own words, a fatal reputation of finding unanswerable reasons when the time comes for breaking its faith, the least that Mussulmans are entitled to is a plebiscite to be taken in Thrace. But it should be taken under conditions leaving no possibility of doubt about its fairness and the absence of all compulsion, and we urge that the agency for taking such a plebiscite should include representatives of the All-India Khilafat Conference.

If anything, the case of Smyrna is even worse. The same pledge that was given in regard to Constantinople and Thrace was given in regard to "the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor," which are also the ancient "homelands of the Turks." The official census of 1914 shows that in this, the richest province of Turkey's Asiatic Empire, there are only 300,000 Greeks as against 1,125,000 Mussulmans, and that in the Sanjak of Smyrna itself, where the Greek proportion is comparatively larger than elsewhere, there were 377,000 Mussulmans as against 218,000 Greeks. Against these figures the only ones that your Private Secretary has supplied to us are based on some "American estimates," about which we could get no further information from him. It is obvious that if this is all that has to be said in favour of such injustice, the Mussulmans cannot remain unmoved when, in the words of the Turkish Grand Vizier's reply, the Greeks are permitted to seize Asia Minor by the throat. As the Grand Vizier has said, to make Turkey renounce Smyrna would be to deprive her of half the commercial and agricultural value of Western Asia Minor, and no Free Zone could compensate her in any way for the damage sought to be done by dispossessing her of her rich homelands in Asia Minor.

You have already declared yourself on another occasion to be opposed to the application of the doctrine of self-determination to "every fragment, every locality in every country throughout the world," and if, as you then said, a principle of that kind must be laid down "within the limitations which common sense, which tradition will permit," then the enclave proposed to be handed over

to Greek domination cannot be treated differently from the *vilayet* of Smyrna. But in any case, the arrangements sought to be made in the Treaty are obviously unjust and iniquitous. The Greeks were not even at war with Turkey, and yet they were asked to reap the fruits of victory, which they did in the most cruel and inhuman fashion, and the forcible occupation of Smyrna, under the auspices of the Principal Allied Powers, assumed, in the words of the suppressed report of the Inter-Allied Commission, "the aspect of a conquest and a crusade." And while it is proposed to place Muslim majorities in Armenia under the subjection of Christian minorities, and justification is sought for such an arrangement in the allegations of cruelty against the Turks and Kurds, the Greeks, who indulged in revolting massacres and other excesses in Smyrna before the eyes of the Allies, are to administer that region, with the "Option" given to the population to decide five years later in favour of annexation with Greece, but not in favour of reversion to Turkish administration!

With regard to Armenia, the allegations of Turkish misrule are not admitted, and we greatly regret that you have refused to agree to our proposal of an International Commission, on which the All-India Khilafat Conference should be adequately represented, which could hold the first real, open inquiry into the allegations, and substitute for that which is nothing more than interested propaganda, the considered verdict of the civilised world. This was the suggestion which the Turks themselves had also urged, and we cannot infer from this unwillingness the Allies' desire to ascertain the truth.

Nevertheless, the Delegation would gladly agree that non-Turkish nationalities may, if they so desire, be guaranteed autonomous government within the Ottoman Empire consistently with the dignity of the latter as a sovereign State. The fidelity of the Kurds, in spite of interested efforts made to seduce them from their loyalty to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, has remained unshaken; and if the Christians inhabiting Turkish Armenia would not agree to an exchange of Muslim population with Christian between Turkey and the Republic of Erivan, they could be just as effectively protected as a minority as the Indian Mussulmans themselves have been protected in India. After a careful study of the history of the disturbances in Armenia, and the peaceful conditions prevailing there before, Czarist Russian intrigues effectively disturbed them, we have every reason to believe that, if interested interference from the outside ceases,

Muslims and Christians there could once more live together in peace. But to lop off any portion of the four *vilayets* of Erzerum, Trebizond, Van, and Bitlis, in which Mussulmans number 2,083,000 or 80 per cent, of the total population as against 362,000 or 13 per cent. Christian Armenians, as the Treaty contemplates, would be a most unjust and iniquitous proceeding. It would clearly suggest that "the religious issue" is involved and that underneath the stupendous agitation that has been carried on unchecked, particularly in Great Britain, there is a good deal cf "the old feeling of Christendom against Crescent" which, as you rightly said in the House of Commons, in the course of the Constantinople debate, would be fatal to British Government in India. And in view of the fact that in the course of the War the Principal Allied Powers had agreed to hand over Turkish Armenia not to the Christians of Armenia, but to the tyrannical and intolerant Government of the Czar of Russia, it will not be possible to-day to convince unprejudiced opinion that the proposals of the Treaty with respect to Armenia are based on a just regard for the interests of the Armenians themselves.

Apart from the territorial clauses of the Treaty, which seek to reduce the Empire of the Khalifa to limits incompatible alike with the principles of nationality and the obligations of Islamic Law, there are the political clauses, military, naval and air clauses, financial clauses and economic clauses, too numerous to be dealt with here in any detail, which unmistakably seek to take away the strength and the independence which are requisite both for the maintenance of the Khilafat and the continued existence of Turkey as a sovereign State. After reducing the armed forces of the Khilafat to an amazing degree, the Principal Allied Powers have devised checks and controls for the remnants left to it to which no Mussulman could ever agree. The preamble to Part V introducing these clauses, declares that Turkey is required strictly to observe these clauses "in order to render possible the initiation of a general limitation of the armaments of all nations." But, in view of the fact that the armaments of the Principal Allied Powers have assumed such vast proportions, while the existing forces of Turkey, if they remained intact, could by no stretch of imagination be supposed to render impossible the initiation of such a laudable task as the general limitation of armaments, one would have expected that the reduction demanded from Turkey would have been initiated by the Principal Allied Powers in respect of their own armaments. Therefore, since they have not thought fit

to do so, it would be futile on their part to expect the Mussulmans of the world to reconcile themselves to a reduction of the armed forces of the Khilafat, which must always bear such a proportion to the armed forces of the rest of the world, that Muslim apprehensions with regard to the defence of their faith may reasonably be allayed. The meagre forces which the Khilafat is to be permitted to retain cannot reasonably be expected to allay these apprehensions, and the Mussulmans cannot therefore consent to the required reduction.

Still less can they consent to the Allied control which is sought in the Treaty to be exercised over the armed forces of the Khilafat. These are impossible conditions which are subversive alike of the Islamic institutions of the Khilafat and of the independence of Turkey as a sovereign State.

Similar devices have been embodied in the Draft Treaty with regard to Turkish finance, and it is manifest that they are calculated, and no doubt intended, to put an end to the Empire of the Khalifa as a sovereign State.

These are measures which the Mussulmans of India could never countenance, and their practical inference could only have the effect of abrogating the bond of loyalty which they have so far willingly and steadfastly maintained. The question being one of faith and of profoundly cherished religious obligations, no compromise, as we have more than once already pointed out, is possible.

Even at this eleventh hour, therefore, we solemnly urge upon His Majesty's Government to modify their policy towards Turkey, and their intentions in regard to mandates in Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia, which are part of the Jezirat-ul-Arab. Any attempt to enforce the present Treaty cannot but alienate, and, if persisted in, permanently estrange the Mussulmans of India, and with them the rest of their Indian compatriots.

Already a programme of peaceful progressive cessation of co-operation with Government has been arranged, commencing with the renunciation of honours and titles conferred by Government, and ending in the resignation of all employees, including the police and the Army, and the non-payment of taxes; while the Mussulmans have reserved to themselves, in the event of the failure of non-co-operation, the right of taking such other steps in defence of their religious freedom as Islamic Law may dictate or permit.

Already a very large number of Mussulmans, who could not reconcile their conscience with subjection to a Power which appeared to them to be so hostile to the Khilafat, have migrated into other lands; and a much larger number is about to migrate. We need not dilate upon the calamitous consequences, immediate and ultimate, as insistence on the acceptance of this Treaty would involve; and we would, therefore, in the name of our people, earnestly urge upon His Majesty's Government and their Allies the withdrawal of the present Treaty, and its substitution by a more equitable, conciliatory and statesmanlike document. A treaty that would respect the religious obligations of the Muslim world and the national sentiment of India, and assure to the Turkish Empire a progressive and independent sovereign government, would also help to initiate a new understanding, consolidate the old friendship between the Allies and Turkey and pacify and reassure Islam.

It is to the future rather than to the past that our eyes should not be turned, and instead of throwing a challenge to the Muslim world, as this Treaty is calculated to do, the forces of Islam should rather be mustered in the interests of peace and progress.

It seems that, in spite of numerous highly significant indications, the gravity of the issue has not yet been realised. A choice is being forced on the Mussulmans between obedience to the clearest commandments of God and obedience to the dictates of mundane governments, and in such a case Mussulmans can only act on the dictum of their Prophet, that "no obedience is due to a creature of God which involves disobedience towards the Creator."

We have the honour to be
Sir,
Your most obedient servants

MOHAMED ALI
SYUD HOSSAIN
SYED SULAIMAN NADVI
ABUL KASEM

The Indian Khilafat Delegation.

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LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO RAJA OF MAHMUDABAD

(Unpublished)

Aligarh
December 17,1920

My dear Raja Sahib,

I received the other day your printed letter inviting me most cordially to join the ceremony of the inauguration of "The Aligrah Muslim University," and would have replied to it at an earlier date if only I had been sure whereto address my reply to you. You had been expected here on the 9th instant and I intended to write to you on your arrival. But you postponed your visit, and when you actually arrived I happened to be out of Aligarh.

As you state in your letter of invitation, I am aware that the Aligarh Muslim University Act has been brought into operation; but I am also painfully aware that it is not, as you state: "The long cherished dream of the Mussalmans," that "has at last been realised." I am grateful to you for including me among those who have to quote your words, "in sunshine and shade so loyally stood by the MAO College." But that loyalty itself compels me to deny that the College has now "eventually reached its destination". Nor can I feel, as you seem to do that "it has been our privilege to contribute, however humbly, to the achievement of an undertaking to which the community had set their heart, and to which the expressions "great" and "glorious" could legitimately be applied.

I cannot so easily forget that in 1912 the community had rejected with a unanimity that did credit to its intelligence as well as its courage, the terms on which Government proposed to permit the establishment of a Muslim University. Some differences were no doubt created at a later stage; but while a people enjoyed full

freedom of action and of speech the Foundation Committee which was broad based on the people's will stood firmly by that emphatic and unanimous rejection.

As a natural result of repression restored to by the Government during the war, of which so many of us were the earliest victims, subsequent meetings of the Foundation Committee began to demonstrate a most lamentable gradual weakening. But few pretend to doubt that if a plebiscite of the community were taken today, when courage has happily once more returned to your people, the verdict of the community will be overwhelmingly against the terms embodied by Government in the Act which has been brought into operation.

I feel certain that this would have been the result of a communal plebiscite in any case so long as that plebiscite was honestly taken and was unattended with repression. But new factors of the greatest moment have become operative more recently, and in view of the open and persistent hostility which the British Government has lately been showing to Islam and its cruel and deliberate injustice to the martyred people of the Punjab of which it is still unrepentent, no self-respecting Indian can any longer co-operate with this Government. Much less can a Mussalman accept in direct defiance of the commandments of God, a grant from such a Government for the education of his community or permit its control in any shape or form over an institution intended to be the nursery of the future missionaries of Islam.

The Mussalmans of India had loyally abided by all the reasonable implications of their subjection to the British Crown, and in doing so had cofidently relied upon the British Government continuing to respect the obligations imposed on them by their faith, as a condition precedent of Muslim loyalty. In these circumstances Mussalmans had agreed to tolerate some form of Government control in the Muslim University even though state control of education had always been left to be irksome by the best educationists, and doubly so in a country like India where the Nation and the State stood so far apart from each other. But when the Government has, in addition to breaking the most solemn pledges, given to us before and during the war, so completely disregarded our religious obligations in the Treaty of Peace forcibly imposed on a Turkish Government of its own creation, and is still warring against the defenders of the

Khilafat and Islam to permit it to exercise very considerable control over a University of Mussalmans and to receive from its hand a grant for that University is a sin of which no believing Mussalman should be guilty.

In these wholly altered circumstances when the Government had forfeited all titles to Muslim allegiance, the proper course for the promoters of the University to have adopted was to call a meeting of the Foundation Committee to consider the situation thus created and pronounce the community's final judgement on this grave and momentous issue. The least, however, that decency demanded was to convene a meeting of the Muslim University Association. But practically ever since the creation of that independent body the authorities of the Aligarh College had with unique persistence and ultimate success sought to paralyse it and had recognised its existence on rare occasions only to the extent of unscruplously giving to themselves in its name a mandate to spend the income accruing from the University fund on the ever growing needs of their bankrupt College which had ceased to attract Muslim munificence. It was, therefore, idle to expect from the last Honorary Secretary of the College and the Association whose intolerance of his colleagues has been notorious, that he would refer even so momentous an issue to the Muslim University Association so long condemned to remain dormant merely because it contained certain democratic elements. Even at the urgent request of some of us he had not placed before it our letter of the 12th October, in which we called upon it to refuse the professed aid of Government and reject the Charter which gave it such wide powers of the control over the University though he did not fail to get together an irregular Consultation Meeting of that hand of re-actionaries, the Board of Trustees of the Aligarh College, 11 but eight of whom are Life Members, as a result not of election but of co-option, in order to delude the public that the representatives of the community were overwhelmingly opposed to the destructive zeal of a few fanatics. Indeed so far was he from calling the Muslim University Association of which he was as much Honorary Secretary as of the Board of Trustees of the Aligarh College, to pronounce upon the desirability or otherwise of an aid and controlled University at a time when the acceptance of both aid and control had become sinful, that he has since urged upon some Trustees of the College including Nawab Abdul Majid to whom he addressed a letter that is now in my

possession and has already been published, to press Government to take the matter once for all out of the hands of the community and deliver the University Funds to an unrepresentative body by bringing the Muslim University Act into operation, "at as early a date as possible". All this because, forsooth "we talked of taking possession of the University Funds", the Government only too anxious itself to deprive the community of every possibility of exercising exclusively communal control over the communal university, needed to pressing at all and precipitately brought the University Act into operation. And now you propose to inaugurate the University thus brought into being and most cordially invite me to join the ceremony.

Well, my dear Raja Sahib, even if I had so felt inclined I could not attend that ceremony for the simple and obvious reasons that by an illegal order issued to me on the 31st October last by the District Magistrate which, at the request of the Honorary Secretary of the Trustees, he personally enforced with the help of a large body of armed police with fixed bayonets I am forbidden to enter even the grounds of my Old College and your new University, and we have not yet decided to offer civil disobedience to lawful orders and by a self-denying ordinances cannot assist force used in enforcing even illegal orders. This, however, does not mean that I do not appreciate the cordiality of your invitation and I have worked far too long with you not to recognise gratefully the affectionate regard you have throughout personally entertained for me. But in view of the considerations I have set forth in considerable detail above which you will yourself agree must be decisive in my case, the ceremony of the inauguration of such a University cannot but cause the greatest pain to me. Surely, Raja Sahib, this was not the University of your dreams any more than mine, nor can we call this "the achievement of a great and glorious undertaking" to which you and I had both set our hearts. For had that been so, could we not have had our hearts' desire in 1912 instead of 1920?

Through the guidance of God I am still true to my dreams and look forward with His assistance to the achievement of a truly great and glorious undertaking, even though we have nothing more to count upon today than 175 honest Muslim youths, (some of them sent adrift by their parents because they could follow God and not Government). Housed in a number of over-crowded bungalows and tents instead of your palatial hostels and cannot even

in the near future hope to lift up to Heaven our earnest devotions five times a day from a more gorgeous House of God than temporary construction of thatch and mud instead of your very ornate mosque. I may perhaps not realise my long cherished dream in the flesh as early as you seem to think you have realised; and it may even be that in spite of my firm resolve to persist in this ardous enterprise the call of my creed and country may possibly compel me at some later date to postpone the pursuit of the educational ideal that has not only been mine but also use to be yours and the final may not perhaps come in my own lifetime. But I have not the faintest doubt that success is destined to be ours and it is in that belief that even today I invite you as your sincere and affectionate friend to reject the base alloy and accept the purest gold.

But whether you accept what I have to offer or not I feel I must continue to work for the old ideals which the experience of more recent years has only served to develop and perfect. As a trustee of the MAO College on half of its Old Boys who did me the honour of electing me unanimously for the third time during my absence in Europe, and of the University Funds on behalf of the vast masses of my co-religionists I will continue to exercise such rights and privileges of a trustee as I am permitted to do in these days of illegal orders and forcible evictions. But consistently with the views I hold I cannot attend the inauguration ceremony of a University that I cannot honestly regard as in any true sense Muslim, though I thank you heartily for the invitation. Apologising for the length of this letter.

I remain your sincere and affectionate friend,

(Sd.) Mohamed Ali

Trustee of the MAO College and
Member of the Muslim University
Association

Source :
Mohamed Ali Paper

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LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI TO HIS SON

Karachi 21-1-22

My dear Boy,

Thanks for your letter. It did my heart good to see that both Amy and you are not idle and doing your bit in this great war. It is an honour to serve in such a good cause. I want every one of our family to do his or her utmost. Not only men but even women and girls must prepare themselves to undergo every kind of discomfort. I am living next door to the female ward and I often wish either mother or Amy or any woman worker was there to lift up these sisters of ours. There is only a wall between, and they can hear us. The one result has been that hearing my *Azan* they have started saying prayers.

We get news in the jail also and know everything that passes outside. I am glad that the fate of this R.T. Conference is settled and our course is now clear. We have done all we could for peace, but this God-forsaken Government does not want it nor desire it. They are doomed and God means to punish them through us - weak, miserable mortals though we are.

Give my love to Shahid and Abid. I am sure in Maulana (Abdul Bari) Saheb's hands their education would be safe. Ask how far they are progressing. Abid must really work hard to finish the holy Koran soon. Take care of your health. A man in weak health cannot make a good soldier of God.

I am writing this on an important subject. Please show it to Mahatmaji. I am afraid he does not know the conditions in Indian jails. Of course, men of our position have an easy time as no man dares to treat us very badly, but pin-prick, are there daily and every rule is interpreted against us. They would like to do more but dare not. It is our other workers who are made to suffer humiliating

conditions and in their interest we must issue clear instructions to our workers so that when they are inside the jail, they come with some definite knowledge and instructions. Our duties and work do not end when we are sent to jail. One part is done and then the other begins. Be cheerful. Through suffering and supreme courage we must show to this Government that they are dealing with no soft, demoralised people, but with men fired with a new courage to free their faith and country once for all. If we accept tamely all the humiliating conditions we encourage them to go on. To a certain extent it is useful to give them rope so that they may throw away the mask of nobility and virtue they had put on. They will show themselves in their natural nakedness and dirtiness both of heart and soul. I would suggest that all workers be told beforehand about the following:

(1) They must be courteous to all especially to their fellow prisoners and Indian warders who are weak and helpless and made to do dirty work. We must lift them up and give them real courage and teach them patriotism and discipline. Along with this we must have full confidence in ourselves and in our capacity for suffering.

(2) We must ask for clean food, clothing and bedding. But this is the least important thing in my opinion. The more important things come later.

(3) We must do as much work as we can easily accomplish without detriment to our health. If forced to do more than our strength or circumstances permit, we can really retaliate by refusing to work, the only weapon in our hands. It is a strong weapon and so has to be used carefully. This weapon can always bring the jail people to their senses, but it is not easy to wield it. We must cheerfully face the penalties and through suffering defeat them. Hunger strike is another weapon; it is very weak and Moslems cannot use it. It only weakens our health while we must really get strong here, both physically and spiritually. We must teach this Government, both outside the jail and inside of it, that it cannot coerce or force us to do things against our wishes. At the same time we must not shirk work or show that we are not capable of bearing hardship. There are some very humiliating practices which we must refuse to perform:

(a) Every evening all clothes are taken off and only in a little slip we show that we have not concealed anything in our groins.

(b) Jail parade, where you are made to do things which kill self-respect and in the name of discipline, humiliate you.

(c) Paying the call of nature with many people round about you and a warder watching you and so forth.

(d) *Azan* must be openly said by each 5 times daily at prayer time. They objected to my calling *Azan* but I smiled and told the Superintendent that they should never expect such a thing from me and should not even mention them. He kept quiet. The result is that now nearly four times more people say their prayers than before and *Azan* the beautiful is heard in four places daily. Of course we must see that no violence is used. Tell our great chief that non-violence is maintained by prisoners also. They love and respect us and I think will obey us cheerfully. The Superintendent thinks that if all political prisoners were like me life would be happy. I never complain, never ask for anything, and I am always laughing and singing.

Love to you.

(Sd.) S.A.

P. S. We are all in excellent health. Mohamad Ali, Doctor, and Pirsaheb live on one side and meet together daily, but we brothers are not allowed to see each other even when ill. Isn't it funny? We were to be transferred but somehow it did not come off. They can always interfere in our work by ordering transfers from jail to jail. It is for this reason that I have suggested uniform instructions from Mahatmaji so that our young workers may know what to do in the situation manfully. Personally I look upon myself as a soldier fighting in trenches and so neither ask for anything nor complain. The enemy may do his worst. I will do my best to come out the winner. He will use violence and I will draw on the reserve fund of my patience and courage. When the fight starts in grim earnest, we too will create non-violent troubles, so that the enemy will be in a fix what to do. They would not be in a hurry to send us to jail. In the meantime, I have taken advantage of the diet and am starting. I have reduced my weight by 40 lbs. and am feeling strong and well, and have finished two readings in Koran-sharif. My *Azan* is heard all over the jail. The jail population is uncommonly clever and wants to keep fully in touch with the national movement. The majority

are Moslems here. We receive great kindness from all the Hindu subordinates who are extremely good. I work, pray and sing, and sleep for solid 9 hours daily. Poor Mahatmaji must envy this holiday. Love to all. Be-brave and never boast to do more than you can accomplish, work hard.

(Sd.) S.A.

Source :
"*YOUNG INDIA*"
February 2, 1922

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LETTER FROM MAULANA MOHAMED ALI TO PT. NEHRU

(Unpublished)

Bis-millah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim

La Ghalib Illah-Lah

Fairy Villa,
Bhowali, U.P.
(October 1923)

My dear Jawahar,

I cannot tell you how much I regret my inability to attend the first political conference of my, own province held since my release but I trust after my unorthodox telegram you are convinced that I would have been with you if it had at all been possible. After my return from Delhi I was far from well and fever which held me in its grip for several days made me give up my visit to Almora which had been arranged for the first October. I had barely recovered when a strong Almora contingent took me to this stronghold of non-cooperation and I had to follow my old friend Sir William "Malice" (Marris)-almost like Nemesis.

My daughter's temperature had appreciably gone down during my absence at Delhi when the weather was dry and bright here, being on average 100° in the afternoons and 101° in the evenings. But it began to be wet again a couple of days before I retuned with the result that during the next 10 days or so the temperature gradually rose to 103° again. Since the 5th instant, however, Amina has been better again and her temperature is 100° in the afternoons and 101.4° in the evenings. In fact I look forward to great improvement in October and would like to remain with her throughout the month in order to make the most of this weather through careful nursing -in truth "make hay while the sun shines." But then Shaukat's release *which may now take place any day*, must keep me on the

move and I am leaving for the Bombay Presidency. As I cannot hope to return before the 7th November if Shaukat's release takes place no earlier than the very last day, viz. 31st October, Amina is naturally unwilling to let me go. It was with the greatest difficulty that she allowed me to proceed to Jullundur for the 17th and 18th. For this purpose I had intended to leave here on 15th but as Maulana Abdul Bari who had so graciously excused my not proceeding to Lucknow and was himself coming here was twice prevented from doing so, I have now arranged to leave Bhowali on the 14th and to proceed to Lucknow which I leave for Jullundur on the 16th. You *must* join me on the 16th by the Punjab Mail. We have so much to talk and *decide* upon.

Please convey to your conference my extreme regret at my unavoidable absence. If I could have been with you believe me I would not have lagged behind. I do hope your conference will soon remove from U.P. the reproach of being the "Disunited Provinces." Let the Provincial Congress assembly send from the sacred soil of Kashi itself the message of the greater and more solid *sanghathan*, the *sanghathan* of the National Congress, which should aim at the union of all down-trodden and oppressed humanity suffering untold torture and humiliation under the heel of Europe. And let us all go forth from this conference truly *shuddh*; purged of all narrowness, bigotry and intolerance in order to free our motherland from the most cramping slavery-the slavery not only of the body but also of the soul. May God crown your efforts with success and out of His bounty give us all fresh courage and determination and the will to win. If there is still anything of the old world spirituality in Kashi, let us recommence the work of our great chief, Gandhiji, in the spirit of religious devotion and utter unworldliness. That way alone lies salvation of India and of the East and in fact of all humanity.

With love to all and kisses for you,

Yours affectionately,

(Sd.) MOHAMED ALI
(in Urdu)

Source :
Jawaharlal Nehru Papers
Roll-48

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LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO ABBAN MIAN

(Unpublished)

Bis-millah-ir-Rahman-ir-Raheem

La Ghalib Illal-Lah

Moradabad
Ist November 1923.

Dear Abban Mian,

On reaching here along with Shaukat your letter of the 27th October which had been awaiting my arrival was handed to me.

You know how dear our home at Rampur is to us can easily understand our feelings on learning His Highness's decision. Our public activities, as every body must by now be convinced, are the outcome of a compelling religious necessity, and can therefore only end with our life or with full and final success. Believe me, if we could have accepted any human commands in this connection, they would have been those of our beloved Prince. His Highness knows only too well that after God we love and fear none-else as we love and fear him, and our lives are a consistent record of loyal and loving obedience to all his commands.

We cannot but respect His Highness conviction to which you refer in your letter and to argue with him would, we feel, be an impertinence. But I think we may be permitted to say a word with regard to our own attitude towards the British Government.

It is not so much in our personal interests, nor those of our nation, nor even of Islam as in the interest of the Government itself that claims His Highness as a friend and ally, that we say it should evacuate the Jazeerat-ul-Arab, recognise and respect our religious obligation to the Khilafat, redress the Punjab wrongs and broadbase the administration of India on the Nation's will. No one stands to gain more by this simple act of justice than the British Government itself, and those who ask it to adopt this course demonstrate not

hostility but the truest friendliness towards that Government. This alone can prolong its life today.

No doubt its official advisors profess to view things differently, and urge on it in different course. An agreement between them and us may seem to be impossible today. But reality provides the truest test, and ere long events would convince this Government - that our advice, disregarded though it may still be in the heat of controversy, was the soundest and friendliest.

As for His Highness and Rampur and our brother Rampuris, nothing can diminish by a jot or tithe our love for them, and the prayers of two sinful souls such as we are rise night and day towards the mighty throne of Merciful God, asking for His choicest blessing for them. We have wandered far and wide, but Rampur have ever been our only home, and whatever wondering destiny may still have in store for us, Rampur shall always remain the one spot dear to us as only a man's home can be. It is not given to us to work any appreciable extent for our Rampur brethren, but while working in a larger field, we have never forgotten them. Last but not least, it has always been the ambition of our lives to be of some service to our Prince whose salt we and our people have been eating for so many generations. May Allah keep His Highness in His protection, and spare him every misfortune, great and small. But if ever he needs the services of his subjects, he will, God willing, find none more loyal or more loving than his two exiled subjects. All that we. have and all that we are will be at his to command. May God bless him.

With kindest regards for you.

Your affectionately,
(Sd.) Mohamed Ali

Source :
Mohamed Ali Papers
MOH/L-3885

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LETTER FROM M. MOHAMED ALI TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

(Unpublished)

Bis-millah-ir-Rahman-ir-Raheem La Ghalib Illal-Lah

Bhowali, (U.P.)
7, November, 1923

My dear Jawahar,

Many thanks for your letter of the 1st. We really missed you a great deal at Jullundur and Amritsar and particularly at Lahore where the "leaders" are hopelessly narrow-minded. To think that "Non-Cooperators" who insisted on lawyers abandoning their practice should now be quarrelling about the percentage of posts allotted by a Co-operating Minister (who happens to be a Mussalman) to Hindus and Muslims! I could see little of Gandhism in these Lahore leaders except a little in Santanam and a few others and yet it was the humiliation of the Punjab that had roused all India. Really the Punjab is an eternal puzzle to me. That men who are on occasions so brave, who provide the bulk of British Indian forces and who are so quick to anger, should so soon forget the gross insults of the British to which they were subjected and should be content to remain under the heel of their alien tyrants rather than cease quarrelling among themselves for petty and insignificant things, is quite unintelligible to me. We have successfully urged on Venkatapayya now to hold the Working Committee meeting at Amritsar to deal

1. Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964), son of Pt. Motilal Nehru, was educated in London and was called to the Bar. He practised at the Allahabad High Court and entered politics at the of 26. He fought for the independence of the country and freed India from British yoke in 1947.

with the question of the Sikhs and we shall no doubt also discuss the communal dissensions in the Punjab and the U.P. Your presence is indispensable and I shall never forgive you if you get ill again! Do keep well and help us to come to a proper decision at Amritsar. I shall be there on the 12th by the Lucknow Mail.

If you hadn't written to me about the reality of the Reading reception at Allahabad the *Leader's* glowing descriptions might perhaps have led me to suspect Allahabad's loyalty to you and your father and to the ideals you have placed before it. But then we know the *Leader* too! Its Bombay correspondent had the audacity to proclaim that not more than 50 people received me at the station on my arrival at Bombay. As it happened, however, the ubiquitous photographer and cinema man were there and the Sunday *Bombay Chronicle* published a photograph in which you could perhaps count 2 to 3 thousand persons. All I know is that I had to fight my (way) through the crowd to the carriage awaiting Mother and me. Well, well, we know the *Leader* and its "brood".

Affectionate regards to Indu, Mrs. J, "Swaroop Apa" and Father.

Yours affectionately,

(Sd.) MOHAMED ALI
(in Urdu)

Source :
Jawaharlal Nehru Papers.
Part I, Vol. XXXXVIII

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LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO PT. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

(Unpublished)

Private

National Muslim University,
Aligarh

15 January, 1924

My dear Jawahar,

I have just received your letter, and must "protest most indignantly" once more against your misplaced modesty! My dear Jawahar! It is just because some members of the Working Committee distrust and dislike your presence as Secretary that *I like it*. Do you think they trust and like my presence as President? It was at Delhi that I painfully realised what so many of my friends wanted to do. Their words in acknowledging my leadership are as flattering as they well could be, but they mean only that *they* should lead *me*. When I offer them anything in the nature of a lead they fight shy of it. As President I cannot get rid of my responsibilities; and it was nothing short of prevention of cruelty to animals that compelled me to seek refuge from partisan narrowness in you and Kitchlew and Deshpande and some members of the Working Committee. We have certainly not got a very homogenous Working Committee, and it will not certainly accept anything tamely, but I think it will "work", and that chiefly through men like you on whose freedom from partisanship I have learnt to rely. Our Orchestra will play very much in the way suggested by the Persian saying:

Man che me sarayam wa Tamburai man che me sarayed.

(What tune am I singing and what tune is my Tambura playing).

But there is no help for it and I know even without your declaring it that you are not in the habit of "shedding tears for

past follies". So be cheerful and let us start work. "Are we downhearted?" No.

I am sorry that the AICC Office has not come yet. Do wire to them to pack up and start. I think my holiday, too, is over, and I must start correspondence with all the Provinces and with individual members of our Committee. I haven't got any good short-hand typist yet to work as my personal assistant and in the circumstances you will have to send me one of the Secretariat clerks, the best that you can find. This will give me an opportunity of kicking him out if he is no good, and if we are merely wasting money on him. Do be on the look out for a really efficient stenographer for me.

As regards the applications, let me have a look at a few that you have selected out of large number that you have received. Our standard must necessarily be high; for, a few good men are better than an army of incompetents. I am trying to persuade Sherwani to take up one of these Under-Secretaryships but of course that will not be the one you need most viz. the post of the man who will be in entire charge of the Congress routine. Sherwani is a splendid man to be placed in charge of our Congress membership department, for, apart from worrying thro' correspondence all the provinces to increase their membership, he can visit provincial centres from time to time and see that the provinces are doing this work.

What you say about the insolvency of your Provincial Committee must be true of almost every other province and membership fees, even if they bring very little, must bring us something, and we must press for speedy enrolment of more members. But the Tilak Swarajya Fund must be revived and I mean to begin with U.P. I am writing to the Khilafat Committees in the U.P. for which "kind" friends have made me the President, and I am asking them to arrange with Congress Committees for invitations being sent to me together with the amount that the Khilafat and Congress Committees are going to give to me as *Nazrana*! Can you join me on a short tour in the U.P. or must you remain at Allahabad to organise your office? A good Hindu to keep me company is essential. Who else can you suggest, if you cannot come yourself?

As for the Working Committee meeting, fix one up for any convenient date towards the end of January, for earlier than that will not be possible unless of course Mahatmaji's illness forces us to go to Poona earlier. Why not have the meeting at Poona itself?

I have received your wire quoting Lajpat Rai's. What does he take us for in asking us to organise a national demand for Mahatma's release? I think our friend has succeeded in eliminating every bit of the spirit of Non-Cooperation that he had ever imbibed. A government that released him on account of illness will not perhaps keep the Mahatma incarcerated after a much more serious illness, but demands for the release of the Mahatma we must leave to our Malaviyas and Gours, and Lalaji who evidently belongs to the same group had better openly join them. Isn't it funny that those who have been most opposed in spirit to the Mahatma are the loudest in demanding his release from the Government. For us there is only one demand for his release, and that must be addressed to the nation!

Love to Indu and to your sister and kind regards to your dear mother and wife.

Yours affectionately,
MOHAMED ALI

Source :
Jawaharlal Nehru Papers
Part I, Vol. XXXXVIII

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LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO PT. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

(Unpublished)

Bis-millah-ir-Rahman-ir-Raheem

La Ghalib Illal-Lah

Jamia Millia Islamia,
Aligarh

21st January, 1924

My dear Jawahar,

I have been scanning the *Leader* every morning for news of your arrest along with Malaviyaji's in case nobody wires to me direct about it; but today's *Leader* has ended my suspense for I find the Governor has at last been "reclaimed" by the Panditji and has not only come to Prayag but has carried you to the Government House to talk ever so sweetly with you over your municipality's resolution to take over charge of the Ganges and the Jumna and the third invisible sacred stream that runs underneath the two at the Sangham to make the Tribeni. Have I read the situation rightly? Or are you still determined to go to jail if only for the novel experience of having the Panditji as your "strange bedfellow" in this "misfortune"? If you are not arrested in tomorrow's *Leader* I propose to write to you at some length in reply to three of your letters. But for the present I wish to let you know that I am off to Delhi on the night of the 24th inst. and from there I go on the night of the 25th by the Express to Kalyan and thence on the 27th (by the connecting train) to Poona to see my Bapu! This is because when I asked on the 16th if I could come I was told I may but that Bapu does not want any-one of us to desert his post. Subsequently Ansari and Hakimji were also told that they may come with me but that there should be no demonstration of any sort. In order to avoid all fuss we intended to go without telling anyone; but Ansari as a doctor stopped us from

proceeding at once for fear, our emotions which could not be repressed may react on Bapu's and exhaust him too much just yet. So we decided to go later and reach Poona on the 27th so that I would not be deserting my post—being required in Bombay on the 29th and 30th and Bapu too would be stronger by then. Now I write to ask you if you would care to join "the Three Musketeers" anywhere on the way or at Kalyan Station and see Bapu on the 27th. Just wire if you can join us and if so where. But don't tell anyone else—I mean except friends who should not tell others. More tomorrow.

Yours ever affectionately,
MOHAMED ALI

Source :
Jawaharlal Nehru Papers
Pt.I, Vol., XXXXVIII

63

LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI, PRESIDENT, CENTRAL KHILAFAT COMMITTEE, TO THE DEPUTY SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT

(*Unpublished*)

14th February 1924

The undersigned is in receipt of the letter of the Deputy Secretary, No. D. 83, dated 5th February, 1924, with regard to the issue of passports to enable Khilafat delegations to visit certain Muslim States.

2. With reference to the first part of paragraph 1 of that letter the undersigned regrets that he is unable to appreciate the reason assigned for a previous consultation with the Governments of the various countries to be visited, and no other reason is "obvious". The Central Khilafat Committee has no reason to doubt that the Government concerned would be prepared to receive the delegations unless, of course, any outside influence is brought to bear upon some of them and a prejudice against these delegations is here sought to be created.

3. As a matter of fact, however, the Turkish Government has already telegraphed that the Khilafat delegation would be most welcome; and "*al-Qibla*", the official organ of the Hedjaz Government, has also published that the Sharif Saheb of Mecca is equally prepared to welcome such a delegation. Other indications also exist which leave the Central Khilafat Committee in no doubt about the matter.

4. Even if the Central Khilafat Committee had any doubt about the reception of these delegations, it would be far from clear why the Government of India should want to elicit the view of the Governments in question with regard to a matter with which only Mussalmans are concerned. It is a religious obligation imposed on

every Muslim to exert himself and make peace whenever some Muslims have fallen out amongst themselves; and the situation in Muslim countries which the Khilafat delegations under reference would seek to improve has recently been aggravated, as newspapers indicated, by a sanguinary conflict in which one of the sons of the Sharif Saheb of Mecca is stated to have been severely wounded by the forces of the Amir of Nejd. It is surprising indeed that it should occur to any non-Muslim that such peaceful efforts as the delegations are intended to make would be welcome to those who share the same religion and are bound to recognise the imperative character of a Muslim's duty to make peace between his brethern.

5. It has repeatedly been declared by the Government of India that it does not desire to interfere in the religious concerns of the Mussalmans. The undersigned has no doubt that the Mussalmans of India would look upon the intervention of Government in this matter as an undesirable interference in a purely religious matter, which is a domestic concern of the Mussalmans themselves, and that they would certainly regard such interference as contrary to the repeated declarations of Government.

6. The latter part of paragraph 1 of the letter under reference appears even more strange, in as much as Government is not inclined to tolerate the absence from this country of people whose presence here it obviously tolerates in spite of their conviction and imprisonment for alleged offences against itself.

7. As things stand at present, it is entirely in the hands of Government to prevent any Muslim who wants to do his obvious duty by his co-religionists from going out of this country to do it. The attitude of Government in recent years had forced upon prominent Indian Mussalmans an attitude towards it which has culminated in the case of most of them in conviction and imprisonment for the offences which Government has seen fit to select and specify in the letter under reference. But these alleged offences concern only the Government of this country, and, even if they are not wholly irrelevant in the dealings of Indian Mussalmans with their brethern outside India, they do not certainly bring any discredit in the estimation of the Muslim world upon those who have been made to suffer imprisonment by the Government of India in consequences of them.

8. Moreover, it is universally understood that the object of issuing passports by a State is to enable those who apply for them to seek the protection of the representatives of that State in the countries to be visited in case of necessity. The Khilafat delegations would not need, and do not desire such protection, and passports have been applied for only because under existing rules no Indian can leave the shores of India without them. To refuse to issue passports in such a case seems to be a clear abuse of a system designed in the interests of those who apply for passports.

9. In conclusion, the undersigned trusts that the passports applied for will be issued without further delay. Several months have already elapsed, and any further delay would aggravate the situation which the delegations hope to improve on their arrival in the countries concerned.

10. Kindly communicate your reply to the undersigned as usual to his Bombay address.

Source :
Home Department, 1924

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LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO SWAMIJI[1]

Respected Swami Maharaj,

I am sorry I could not write to you yesterday regarding the matter referred to by you, as per promise, as I had gone out to pay a visit to H.H. the Nawab Sahib of Rampur and had to remain there from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. I have just now seen in the '*Tej*' a requisition by four of your Arya friends that I should resign from the Congress. I could not help feeling amused at it, although I confess it grieved me also. I am aware that some persons of this type have been engaged in this sort of activity for some time past, but I was led to think that after the reply that I had given to a question addressed to me at a public meeting in Lucknow, which appealed so much to a Hindu gentleman present, that he shouted out in his enthusiasm that 22 crores of Hindus were ready to stand or fall by me, these gentlemen would not venture to pursue their line of activity any further. I now realise how vain this expectation was. Although the manner in which the controversy is conducted at present is such as to render it absolutely unnecessary on my part to give a single word in reply, still as I have already promised to explain to the matter fully, I beg to make the following statement as desired by you:

The fact is as I had stated verbally to you. Even then, some Mussalman friends have been constantly flinging at me the charge of

1. Shradhanand Munshi Ram Mahatma. (1856-1926) studied Law at the University Law College, Lahore but soon converted to Dayanand's views after he read his *Satyarth Prakash.* Dayanand and his works exercised influence on him and he joined the Arya Samaj at Lahore. He started a weekly paper the *Satya Dharam Pracharak.* He entered politics towards the closing period of his life and joined Gandhiji in 1919. The riots in 1920's took his life and he was assassinated in 1926.

being a worshipper of Hindus and a Gandhi-worshipper. The real object of these gentlemen was to alienate from me the Mussalman community, the Khilafat Committee and the Congress, by representing that I had become a follower of Mahatma Gandhi in my religious principles. I had, therefore, on several occasions plainly declared that in the matter of religion, I professed the same belief as any other true Mussalman, and as such I claimed to be a follower of the Prophet Mohamed (on him be peace) and not of Gandhiji. And further that since I hold Islam to be the highest gift of God, therefore, I was impelled by the love I bear towards Mahatmaji to pray to God that he might illumine his soul with the true light of Islam. I wish, however, to emphatically declare that I hold that to-day neither the representatives of Islam nor of the Hindus, Jewish, Nazarene or Parsi faiths can present another instance of such high character and moral worth as Gandhiji and that is the reason why I hold him in such high reverence and affection. I deeply revere my own mother, and if contentment and gratefulness under all circumstances be the true meaning of Islam, I claim there is no person, howsoever well-versed in religion, who has understood it better than she. Similarly I regard Maulana Abdul Bari as my guide. His loving kindness holds me in bondage. I deeply admire his sincerity of heart. But inspite of all this, I make bold to say that I have not yet found any person who in actual character is entitled to a higher place than Mahatma Gandhi.

But between belief and actual character there is a wide difference. As a follower of Islam I am bound to regard the creed of Islam as superior to that professed by the followers of any non-Islamic religion. And in this sense the creed of even a fallen and degraded Mussalman is entitled to a higher place than that of any other non-Muslim irrespective of his high character, even though the person in question be Mahatma Gandhi himself.

At Lucknow, when just before the commencement of my speech, some one placed a printed copy of the question in reference in my hand for reply (copies of which had also been freely distributed among the audience) I had stated that I did not want to answer any such questions, as I did not consider that any one, unless he could prove that he bore a greater affection towards Mahatmaji than I did, was entitled to charge me with having reviled him. It was only when I was told that the point at issue was not that I had reviled Mahatmaji, but that I had reviled the Hindu religion, that I gave the

above-stated reply. A report of my speech had appeared in the *HAMDAM* at that time, i.e. about one month back. I had said further therein that every Christian believed that a Christian, however degraded or fallen, was entitled to a higher place in regard to the matter of belief as contra-distinguished from actual character than any Mussalman or Jew, irrespective of his high character and the same was the case with Hindus or followers of any other religion. My reply proved so satisfactory that as I have already mentioned a Hindu friend shouted out that 22 crores of Hindus were prepared to stand by me and several Hindu members of the audience acclaimed it with cries of Bande Mataram, Allah Akbar, while the persons who had brought the printed copies of the question were completely silenced. The beauty is that one of the friends who have now come forward with a requisition demanding my resignation had quite recently sent a warm invitation to attend a public meeting at Dehra Dun.

I cannot under these circumstances possibly retire from any of my activities as a result of what these gentlemen might say or think. Besides the matter is well within the jurisdiction of the Congress. I wish, however, to state here, and I hope you will bear me out in my statement, that if I, although I am the meanest and the most insignificant among the followers of Islam, am to be regarded by these gentlemen as an enemy of Hindu-Muslim unity and a reviler of Mahatmaji and the religious principles which he professes, then I am afraid they will not find a single Mussalman who will completely satisfy them.

I beg to state once more that were I not bound by my promise to you, this letter might not have been written at all as I am most unwilling to add one more to the numberless controversies that are raging in the country at present. As for the friends who have thought fit to raise such an unpleasant controversy at a time when the death of my daughter and the dangerous illness of a brother and mother have rendered me physically unfit to engage in any such controversy, I think it best to leave them to be judged by their own conscience. I again beg to record my thanks to you for your condolence and with these words take my leave. If you write anything to the press in this connection, you may publish this letter as it is.

Yours etc.
(Sd.) MOHAMED ALI

Source :
Young India, April 10, 1924.

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LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO THE EDITOR, THE "TEJ" DELHI

Dear Sir,

There was one sentence in Swamiji Maharaj's letter which is liable to give the impression that I do not consider right action as essential for salvation. That is not at all my belief nor that of any other Mussalman. The essential conditions for salvation are faith, purity of action, persuading others to do good and to warn them against evil and to submit to all consequences of your actions with patience. I hold that a non-Moslem is perfectly entitled to reward for his good action even as a Mussalman is liable to be punished for his evil deeds. The point at issue was not at all as to the essential conditions for salvation, but only regarding the distinction between Belief and Conduct. That is the reason why I gave to Mahatmaji the highest place among all the Mussalmans that I know of so far as actual character was concerned. But to consider one's creed as superior to that of every non-Muslim is the duty of a Mussalman. By stating this I refuted the charge of Gandhi-worship levelled against me and that was precisely my object and not to hurt the feelings of my Hindu brethren or to revile Mahatma Gandhi. If any one can have reason to complain it is my own co-religionists, none of whom I considered to be worthy of being ranked with Mahatma Gandhi in excellence of character.

(Sd.) MOHAMED ALI

Source :
The Young India, April 10, 1924

66

LETTER FROM MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI, PRESIDENT, CENTRAL KHILAFAT COMMITTEE, TO THE DEPUTY SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT.

(*Unpublished*)

BOMBAY
2nd May 1924

In continuation of the correspondence regarding the granting of passports to the Khilafat deputations, the undersigned has been ordered by the Working Committee of the Central Khilafat Committee to inform you that while strongly resenting the restrictions imposed by the Government in the choice of the personnel it has decided, owing to the urgency of the work for the present to send only one of the deputations, i.e. to Turkey.

The Central Khilafat Committee had already through the undersigned assured the Government that the deputations had no intentions to interfere in the internal affairs of the countries visiting, but as the Government insisted on the petty annoyance of asking the individual members also to give personal undertaking, the Committee has requested members of the delegation chosen to give such undertaking if the Government was still of the same opinion and insisted on it.

The undersigned requests you to kindly issue passports for the following gentlemen:—

1. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari of Delhi.
2. Hakim Mohammed Ajmal Khan Saheb of Delhi.
3. Maulvi Mufti Kifayatullah Saheb, President, Jamiat-ul-Ulema--e-Hind, Delhi.
4. Mr. Mohammed Marmaduke Picktall, Editor of the *Bombay Chronicle*, Bombay.

5. Maulana Sulaiman Nadvi of Shibli Academy, Azamgarh.
6. Mr. Tassadduq Ahmad Khan Sherwani of Aligarh.
7. Chaudhri Khaliquzzaman, Chairman, Municipal Board, Lucknow.

To avoid delay every such person was excluded from the delegation who came under the category of those objected to by the Government.

The delegation desires to leave as early as possible and would go via Suez and Egypt to Constantinople, Angora, and other parts of Turkey. The delegation would meet the President and the members of the Grand National Assembly of Angora, the Ulema and other prominent persons in Turkey and to impress on them the desirability both in the interest of Islam and Turkey to reconsider their decision about the Khilafat.

The Mussalmans of India love their Muslim brethern all over the world and especially those of Turkey and Arabia, and they would be the last to do anything to bring discord and trouble to them.

The undersigned will be glad to supply any further information needed by the Government.

A very early grant of passports is requested.

Source ;
Home Department, 1924

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LETTER FROM M. MOHAMED ALI TO PT. JAWAHAR LAL NEHRU

(*Unpublished*)

Bis-millah-ir-Rahman-ir-Raheem La Ghalib-Illal-llah

PRIVATE

Matheran
15th June, 192

My dear Jawahar,

Do forgive me for not writing to you all this time. You kno how much I needed some holiday after my daughter's death an perhaps you can realise how I have been unable to have it o account of Shaukat's relapse early in April and then the conversation at Juhu and finally this trip of mine to Upper India which took m away on the 20th May from Matheran and brought me back her on the 3rd of June. I have had my holiday "in samples" and I not like it cut up that way. Your letters Nos. 650/30, 750/25, 752/7 and 786 all while I was away at Delhi, Lahore, Aligarh, Rampu (only Rly. Station-British territory!), Naini Tal and Lucknow an No.824/53 arrived when I was recovering from the fatigue of thi journey. Thank God there was nothing that I could suggest to yo about the subject matter of these letters, so that Congress work coul not really have suffered (It never suffers through the indolence Presidents who are wise enough in their generation to select a industrious "working" Secretary!) Your last letter 862/40 regardin Konda Venkatapayyaji's election award in the Maharashtra, althou it did not suggest that I would have anything to do with it mysel did not bode anything good, and as fate comes now Mr. Mandlik's (postcard which succeeds in rousing me at last into spasmodic activit To give ruling in the A.I.C.C. meetings is bad enough, but to hav to give them in advance is worse. I have written to you separatel about that and have enclosed copies of the letters I have written t

Messrs. Paranjpye[1] and Mandlik.[2] I do hope you agree with me that the last clause of Art. XIX does not refer to the block of representatives of any particular Province but to the whole A.I.C.C. My ruling is not likely to please Mr. Mandlik and for the sake of "peace", if nothing else, I would have allowed his lot to come and join us at Ahmedabad. But "peace" I am not going to have and so I decided to let the "law" have its course. A Province that fails to elect its representatives in time or in a proper manner can have no grievance against the world if it remains unrepresented and if we went on inviting its old representatives it will have little incentive to look sharp and elect the new set. Whatever grievance it has, is surely against the Provincial Executive and I have enough worries of my own not to grieve over those of others. All the same, I fear Mr. Mandlik will not spare me!

But the more inevitable worry is that for which the Mahatmaji is responsible. You have been very silent about it and besides Shaukat I have had nobody to share my worry. Now do tell me what you think. I do not know whether my conversations with Bapu at Juhu have had any effect at all in the matter of the Hindu-Muslim tension. Perhaps he would have heard next to nothing about the Muslim side of it if I had not told him what I had *heard* because I do not think many Mussalmans had corresponded with him. Since I could not speak with *personal* knowledge all that my conversations could do was to suggest to him that there is a Muslim side too. In one respect, however, I am positive that I failed to impress him at all and that is the character of his "worshipful brother" Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. He comes out of it the best of us all! And yet both Shaukat and I were under the impression that Bapu thought

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1. Shivaram Mahadev Paranjpe (1864-1929) was deeply influenced by Tilak who moulded his political ideas. He started his career as a Professor of Sanskrit, at Maharashtra College, Poona. But he soon resigned and entered in politics. He started a weekly, the *Swarajya* for political propaganda.

2. Ramchandra Narayan Mandlik (1881-1958) was educated at Poona and started his career as an ardent follower of Tilak. He took to journalism and acted as a reporter of the *Indu Prakash* (Bombay), and a correspondent of the *Vande Mataram* (Calcutta). He started a daily, the *Lokmanya* in Bombay which was banned by the Government for its anti-government activities.

very differently of the noble Pandit. If Bapu believes all that he say about him - and there can be little doubt of it - then I must despair o the near future at any rate. I had discussed the matter frankly with your father and he told me that he largely agreed with me that Malaviyaji was *out* to defect Gandhism and to become the leader o *the Hindu only* since he could not be the leader of *Muslims as well as Hindus,* and that Hindu-Muslim unity was *not his* ideal. My dear Jawahar, God knows that the Mussalmans too hav their Malaviyas and there is no love lost between them and me. But thank God they have not the influence over their community through lack of ability and well-earned reputation for self-sacrifice and communal work that Panditji has over so many people of his community. If Panditji is all that Bapu says he is, then I do not know in what category I can place you and your dear father. Certainly you two and he have struck me as poles asunder. But the Hindu-Muslim tension is not my immediate concern. I realise that it will not be removed quite so soon as I had at first hoped. What worries me most is Bapu's "thunderbolt" about the Swarajists which I knew was coming and yet hoped it may not come. Your father does acknowledge that men like us *have* done something to make things easier for the Swarajists, though his appreciation of our labours is somewhat reluctant and halting for he judges them by their results and not by the nature of those labours themselves, as men in his position are naturally apt to do. But we certainly have failed entirely in averting"the bolt" chiefly because it was in a way "from the blue". It was in the very last hour of the very last of our many visits to Juhu that he told Shaukat and me what he was going to do and I came and told you about it, though at the time I was hoping against hope that this had only just occurred to Bapu and he would yet change his mind. Even then we had suggested to him that the analogy of the British Cabinet was not correct that the A.I.C.C. was much more like the House of Commons than the Cabinet. In fact all the analogies are incorrect since the A.I.C.C. is a *federal* body and though the No-Changers command a majority in the Congress and in the A.I.C.C. they do not command it in all the Provincial Committees and it seems queer to ask majorities in Provinces to resign in favour of minorities.

Am I not right in being under the impression that you too do not see eye to eye with Bapu in this matter? Do tell me if *you can.*

But there is a question of "legality" also apart from the merits of Bapu's suggestion. Is there any law that can compel the Swarajists to withdraw? Can any resolution of the A.I.C.C. make the failure of any member of it to spin or card tantamount to his resignation? It seems to me that whatever view I may take of the merits of Bapu's suggestion, my first duty as President will be to consider its legal bearing. What do you say? And what do you think is the law?

I certainly agree with Bapu that the present "sham" must end. We have too long tolerated only "lip respect" for the Constructiv Programme and I do think there are many Congressmen whose respect for it in reality is almost nil, but who show their disrespec only in private and among friends and I do not see how we can induce the country to take up work under the Constructive Programme unless we ourselves take it up almost religiously. (The *almost* is a concession to *your* chagrin at *my religiosity*!). And yet think there is a flaw somewhere in Bapu's logic. At any rate I seem to see an unholy glee on the faces of some No-Changers who were thirstin for the blood of the Swarajists. And whatever good we did by havin Bapu's condemnation of the Swarajists toned down has all disappeared in their ostracism through his latest pronouncement. I do not know if their leanings towards a sort of co-operation with Government have not been assisted by it. Your father has preserve his good temper more than I was inclined to expect; but perhaps that is more for the public and specially for the Government and fear that your prediction will come true and they will go still farthe off from us and go in a very hostile spirit indeed. As I have said in a recent (and reluctant) interview, I am more concerned with the work under the Constructive Programme that our No-Changers do and less with the work that the Swarajists fail to do. I know the atmosphere for work of this nature is terribly spoilt by the Swarajists since the educated classes are too often found watching the Swarajists doing in the Councils and its reaction on England and the Government there and here, and it is these classes after all that can lead the masses. But is it any good that even those of us who know how bad it is to be watching the doings of these Swarajists should be wastin time on worrying about this state of affairs. At least we should work and not rail at them.

These are my worries at the present moment and my position is not improved by my being a Mussalman and a candid one at that. As the President of the Congress I cannot give a silent vote on bi

issues nor - what I would have otherwise preferred - refuse to vote at all, though on minor issues Presidents often do not vote. And being Mussalman I cannot seek refuge, as you have done at Allahabad in *resignation*, for I fear any such action on my part is bound to react powerfully on the "Hindu-Muslim unity". Even when insulted by men of the type of those who have sent in a motion for my resignation and "damned by faint praise" or none at all from many others I cannot indulge in the luxury of insisting on my dignity even as a man! So far I had kept my feelings to myself and it was this reluctance to share the knowledge of them with other that had so long delayed this letter. And now that I have given expression to them in a crude and unthinking sort of way, I am "almost inclined" as Jinnah would say - to tear up this letter and consign it to the W.P.B. But I resist - so here goes!

By the way, how do you go to Ahmedabad? Why not via Delhi with me on the night of the 24th or the morning of the 25th?

With love to Indu and kindest and affectionate regards to Mrs. Jawaharlal and your sister.

Yours affectionately,
MOHAMED ALI

P.S. As if I had not enough worries what with the Congress and what with the Khilafat (in connection with which Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has attacked me in the Press *without* saying he refers to me) poor old mother has got ill again;

Source :
Jawaharlal Nehru Papers Part I
Vol. XXXXVIII

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LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO GANDHIJI.

(Unpublished)

Kucha Chelan,
Delhi
12th July 1924

My dear Mahatmaji,

The apprehended collision between Hindus and Muslims took place yesterday, all efforts of Unity Board notwithstanding. A young Muslim lad of about 15 years was mercilessly beaten by some Hindu water-carrier or carriers (*Kahars*) for having polluted latter's *Kalsas* (brass vessels) by splashing some water over them or by so carelessly rising his mouth as to allow drops of water rinsed out (which) fell on some of the vessels standing (sic) near the well (it was a common well in a Hindu quarter). Probably an altercation with and then pursuit of the deliquent ensued, which resulted in a pitiless hammering, the boy sustaining bad cuts and injuries. This led to rumour that the said boy had been done to death. The next sequel was almost obvious; some Hindus were beaten; crowds of Hindus and Muslims having gathered in the square before the Kucha where first incident had taken place. Crowds remained standing on either side of the square despite efforts of Congress and Khilafat volunteers and the police. Later in the afternoon some trifling incident proved the signal for a free fight. Mussalmans snatched bamboos from Purdahs of shops and Hindus came out of their *Mohalla* armed with *lathis*. But actual rioters were not more than 30 to 40 on either side. No serious collision took place yet. Some blows and missiles were exchanged. Mussalmans retreated into Ballimaran and Hindus

backed into Katra Nil and bolted the *Pathak* (Gates of their *Mohalla*). They gained the top of a three storied house and began a heavy shower of stones and big bricks. At first opposing party standing in the street received hurts from these missiles, and then there was a counter throw of bricks; but Hindus occupied a height beyond range of throw from the street. But I saw some Mussalmans throwing bricks or stones from the top of the opposite house also. Some of these hit Hindus opposite. Another riot of a similar nature started in another quarter of the town, and solitary Hindus and Mussalmans began (I fear at almost this time) to be laid hold of and beaten. One Hindu to my knowledge was caught hold of and struck pitilessly by *lathies*. But I must confess that first incident coupled with later brick-throwing struck one as both cowardly and provoking. All of us Congress workers and volunteers who attempted to restrain people received *lathies* and brick blows. All exhortation to non-violence appeard to incense people instead of allaying their wrath. Bulk of spectators and others were sorry and deplored it all. But I can say that a handful continued egging others on and yelling and acting like mad man. Like other Congressmen I also was at a discount and was caught by a brick on the right chin. Meanwhile the Superintendent of Police and the District Magistrate accompanied by more police force arrived and succeeded in controlling these mad men. It was a mortifying thing for me to be told by the District Magistrate "Keep away, if you do not want to take part in it." But I, like the rest of Congress workers, realised that I was no use. The Police had to resort to blank fire near the scene of the second affray. But I had retired in the meantime, I shall have preferred to die on the spot, but I realised that it would only make matters worse as the news of my receiving any injury, and the news of other Hindu and Muslim workers being hit was already being made a further *Casus belli*. I saw cowardly Muslims and Hindus first fight or attempt to fight as only crowds can, and I saw a Hindu Police Officer and Anwar, a Muslim volunteer face the shower of missiles without ducking their heads... We were abused by men of our own communities and hit by men of opposite communities.

Some 50 men of whom 10 are Hindus are reported to be in the Public hospital. But many more must have been injured. Larger number of casualties among Muslims are accounted for by the fact that their assailants occupied heights and found a good target in them down below...

Normal conditions, it was reported, have been restored. But I am not at all sure that it is a correct estimate. I am hearing all sorts of rumours, while writing this, but I shall write again after careful investigation.

Respectfully yours.

Saurce :
Mohamed Ali Papers
MOH/L-4701

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LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO GANDHIJI

(*Unpublished*)

Kucha Chelan
Delhi.
12th July 1924

My dear Mahatmaji,

I must take the earliest opportunity of sending you a correction of my last account. I went to the hospital this morning and obtained correct figures of casualties from the Civil Surgeon. Altogether 69 injured were admitted into the public hospital last night. 50 of these were discharged this morning and only 19 remained in this hospital. Two Hindus were in a critical condition. One Hindu woman admitted into the hospital, it is said, went out to save her son and received some blows in the affray. But she is not bad. I saw among the injured, broken heads, arms and legs. It is estimated, however, that as many more have been injured but they never came to the hospital. Knives besides bricks and *lathis* have also been used. Two Hindus and two Muhammadans, are reported to have succumbed to blows. Probably they were caught alone and hammered. According to the Civil Surgeon's information among those admitted into the hospital the number of Hindus was greater. In the second affray they must have got the worse of it. It is all so sad. The worst is not over yet.

We of the Congress are worse than useless just now, the object of everybody's wrath it seems for no reason other than preaching restraint! We have therefore decided to admit our defeat quite frankly and leave the maintenance of peace on the guns and bayonets of the police. The military has not yet been called out. But we have also decided to address ourselves to the task of relieving distress

where we can. We are sending an instalment of Rs. 100/- for the wounded now in the public hospitals, and we can do no more than attend the injured where possible. Shops are closed and affected area is picketed. When they get tired of this sort of life and sue for peace we shall offer our humble services in that direction. As things are I apprehend further trouble. We are simply vanquished and are utterly helpless for the present.

However you will be pleased to learn that in the midst of this display of contemptible cowardice one or two incidents relieve the gloom. Some 15 Muslims who went to pray in mosque in Katra Nil, the base of Hindu combatants where the fight commenced were shut in and surrounded by Hindus. But Lala Shankar Lal who happened to be there supported by another Hindu gentleman saved these isolated Muhammadans from being hammered, if not worse, by offering his head to the infuriated Hindus in place of those Muslims. It was agreed then that they should be left alone but they should give it in writing that they had not been molested before they were allowed to walk out. Meanwhile the authorities came on the scene and the negotiation ended. It is also to be noted with satisfaction that in some of the predominantly Muslim quarters Hindu residents have been assured the fullest protection of person and property.

Respectfully yours,

Source :
Mohamed Ali Papers
MOH/L-4703

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LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO SHUAIB QURESHI

(*Unpublished*)

27th August '24.

My dear Shuaib,

Your letter No. 439 Accounts dated 23rd August.

When I came out of jail this time last year I know nothing of your new rules and went about travelling just as I was doing before with a Private Secretary and a servant. Hayat's travelling expenses have already been sanctioned in the earlier bills submitted to the Khilafat Office. As a matter of fact he was then and is now also the Registrar of the Jamia at Aligarh but travelled with me from Jhansi where I was released and always accompany me in my journies because it was not possible for me to do without somebody as a Private Secretary considering the amount of work I had and still have to put in. We have never separated the Khilafat and Congress work and all Mahatma Gandhi's bill used to be paid by the Khilafat even when he was doing mainly Congress work. If I had followed Shaukat's wishes I could have been sending all my bills even now to the Khilafat Office for payment but at Coconada in the very first Working Committee meeting I asked then to allow me to send my bills to them unless I was doing only Khilafat work at any place because as a matter of fact......... I do not think it proper that all the travelling bills of the Congress President should be paid by the Khilafat. From the middle of January I have been sending my bills to the Congress and only occasionally charge the Khilafat as for example when I went to Calcutta to preside over the Calcutta Khilafat Conference in March last and did absolutely no work for the Congress. But my Secretary's bill were sent to the Congress. However as Said-ur-Rahman was needed in addition to the Private Secretary

he was taken with Shaukat's permission and his bills were sent on to the Khilafat. I am afraid you will have to pass these bills just as they are and if in future you want to lay down any rules for any guidance please let me know what they are. As you can yourself understand I am loath to spend Khilafat money if it can be avoided and I prefer to travel third class if it is day time and the journey is not long so that at the end of it I am unable to do any brain work. The Private Secretary is in my case indispensible and the number of engagements that I had to keep forces this upon me. I am certainly only a member of the Working Committee but I was nothing more than that at any time and yet I always travelled with a Private Secretary and had almost worked as hard as Shaukat himself and certainly more than other members of the Working Committee whose engagements are limited. I need not give the names of some of the members whose bills you pay whom it takes us an age to induce to accept an engagement. It is only part of their time that they give to the Khilafat work the rest is their's. As for myself all my time has so far been at the disposal of the Congress and the Khilafat and I have never refused an engagement unless it has been physically impossible to keep it an account of other clashing engagements. Would you therefore not place me in a class by itself, or rather bracket me with my brother from whom I am supposed to be as inseparable as the "Siamese Twins". I am afraid you will have to reckon me as part of the Old Firm of "Ali Bros." Kindly pass all these bills and send me a complete and detailed account up-to-date for the whole year beginning with 29th August 1923.

Yours affectionately

(Sd.) MOHAMED ALI

Shuaib Qureshi Esq.,
Hon. Secretary,
The Central Khilafat Committee,
Bombay.

Source :
Mohamed Ali Papers
MOH/L-4770

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT, CENTRAL KHILAFAT COMMITTEE TO GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

(*Unpublished*)

5th October 1924

The following resolution was passed by the Working Committee of the Central Khilafat Committee at its meeting on October 4th, 1924, with regard to struggle between Hedjaz and Nejd and the declaration of the British Premier in Parliament as regards British intervention:—

"Working Committee of the Central Khilafat Committee has given its most careful consideration to the fratricidal struggle now going on in the Hedjaz and to the statement of the British Premier in Parliament with regard to British intervention. The Government is emphatically of opinion that in no case can British or other non-Moslem intervention in the sanctuary of the Islam be tolerated by the Mussalmans of India and of the world. No interest of British Indian Moslems in the Hedjaz nor the safety of the pilgrim routes can equal the supreme importance of keeping the Holy Land any pretext. The Committee considers it to be its plain duty to-day to tell all whom it may concern that the Moslems of India as of other places will to a man do whatever lies in their power to prevent non-Moslem interference in the affairs of Hedjaz. The Committee desires that it should be clearly understood that the right and the duty to intervene therein cannot be shared with any non-Moslem and any attempt to do so is bound to be regarded by the Moslem world as an act of hostility towards Islam. The Committee, therefore, warns the British Government to desist from anything having the remotest semblance of such an attempt."

The resolution speaks for itself and the undersigned trusts that the Government of India, which is in a better position than the Government in Great Britain to understand and appreciate Moslem opinion in this country, will do everything in its power to dissuade the latter from attempting any interference in this purely Moslem affairs. It is necessary for the undersigned to point out that if any such unfortunate step is taken by the Government of Great Britain, it will create a situation of the utmost gravity and will result in the consequence of a most serious nature which it is difficult at the present moment to foresee in their entirety. As the Government of India is no doubt aware, the various communities of India are engaged in the difficult task of peaceful reconstruction of their communal national life and it will be most unfortunate if the attention of Moslems is diverted from this peaceful task.

Source :
Home Department, 1924

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LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI, PRESIDENT, CENTRAL KHILAFAT COMMITTEE OF INDIA TO GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

(*Unpublished*)

25th October 1924

While acknowledging the receipt of your letter No. 2362 (Political), dated Simla, the 17th October in reply to undersigned's letter of the 5th October 1924, requesting for passports for Khilafat delegations to Hedjaz and Nejd to settle the dispute between two Muslim States and make suitable arrangements for the administration of Holy Hedjaz in consultation with Muslims of Hedjaz, Nejd and other Muslims of the world.

Your letter in reply refers to your own letter No. D. 929 of the 14th March 1924 in which you had informed undersigned that the programme of each delegation must clearly be defined and detailed and each member must be prepared to give an undertaking "that his visit has no relation to the political affairs of the State or States he proposes to visit and that he will regard himself as bound not to endeavour in any way to promote any political change in any of them or to take part in any political movement."

You had also mentioned "that the above-mentioned information and undertakings are necessary in order to ascertain that the Government of the States concerned are willing to admit a delegation of Indian Muslims : that they have no objection to its personnel and route and its programme."

Undersigned begs to point out that the Hedjaz deputation will be going to Jeddah and from there to Holy Mecca, Medina and Taif and also to other places in Hedjaz, if necessary.

The Khilafat delegation has been invited by all the notables of Hedjaz. Undersigned is asking for passports in order to perform a

great religious duty, and any hindrance thrown in the way will clearly show the extent of religious freedom in this country.

The Nejd delegation would go via Bahrein, or by the shortest route to Riad or any other place where Amir Ibn-i-Saud would like to receive it. The object is the same as in going to Hedjaz, i.e., settlement of all differences between Nejd and Hedjaz, so that the sacred places of Islam may be immune from fratricidal warfare and a permanent arrangement may be made for their governance according to the Shariat and the wishes of the Muslims of the world.

As regards the personnel of the two delegation, the undersigned notices with regret that the Government of India refuses to raise the embargo it put on the inclusion of some of the most prominent Muslims of India.

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In conclusion, the undersigned would emphasize that the mission of the delegation is one of peace, quite unconcerned with any political object other than that of resorting the security of the pilgrimage and finding, in consultation with other parties of the Arabs and with other Muslims, a solution of some problems vital to the Muslim world.

Source :
Home Department, 1924.

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LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO RAGHUPATI UNDER SECRETARY AND TREASURER, A.I.C.C.

(*Unpublished*)

Kuch-i-Chelan
Delhi 16th Feb. undated (1925)

My dear Raghupati Sahai,

Jawaharlal is lying in bed and can't be troubled about accounts. So I send my final bills to you. Do get them checked this very day and send on to the Treasurer for payment. You see the Congress owes me Rs. 683-14-6. I had drawn the amount time to time from the *Comrade* accounts but the *Comrade* is bankrupt and even the salaries of the establishment have not been paid this month. That's why I am asking you to expedite payments. Kindly ask the Treasurer to send me a cheque on the Imperial Bank at Delhi or some other Bank at Delhi for I can't wait long for the cheque to be cashed. If the cheque is drawn on some bank in Delhi the Treasurer should add -/4/- per cent for discount. The last thing would perhaps be to send *insured notes*. But do ask them expedite. I had phoned up to Jawaharlal and he asks me to send the bills to the office.

Why aren't you writing for the *Hamdard*—the only paper in Urdu free from communal wranglings ? No excuse.

Yours affectionately,
Sd/- MOHAMED ALI
(Signature in Urdu)

Source :
A.I.C.C. (Supplementary) Papers F. No. 67/1925

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LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI TO NATIONALIST AND INDEPENDENT PARTIES AND TO CONGRESS PRESIDENT AND SRINIVASA IYENGAR

(*Unpublished*)

My dear Srinivasa Iyengar,

After a period of most remarkable unity and goodwill that prevailed throughout India between the various communities, we have been experiencing for the last five years a most unfortunate tension between the Hindus and the Musalmans which resulted in sporadic outbursts in different parts of India. The Congress in a special session held at Delhi in 1923 endeavoured to restore the unity and goodwill that had prevailed until 1922, but obviously it failed. A year later the Unity Conference at Delhi made a still more strenuous endeavour for the same purpose but in its ultimate results that too alas! proved sterile. The sporadic outburts of 1922, 1923 and 1924 have been occurring with increasing frequency in the years that followed and today we almost expect to read in the daily newspapers of one or two such deplorable incidents somewhere every day. But the increasing frequency of such outbursts is not their worst feature. It is now clear that the communal aggression is becoming organised and in fact, it will be an abuse of language to characterise the recent occurrences as mere outbursts of unruly passions of some individuals only.

The Central Khilafat Committee has consistently worked all through this period for unity and co-operation between the Mussalmans and the sister-communities and has not infrequently courted and actively incurred unpopularity in the Muslim community by condemning such excesses as would be attributed to the Mussalmans by inculcating to their patience and self-control and by remaining

at most silent with regard to the excesses that could be attributed to the Hindus. But today the state of affairs is so deplorable that the Khilafat Committee, if it seeks to serve the interest of India and the Indian nation, cannot remain silent.

My Committee has directed me to request you to fix a very early date when the representatives of the Central Khilafat Committee could meet the representatives of the Congress and discuss the present situation and try to discover the methods that will prove most effective in ending the deplorable state of affairs and paving the way for communal harmony and friendship. The Committee is also, seeking the co-operation of other important political and communal organisations in the country and looking to the seriousness of the danger which is threatening our body-politic. It would like to place the result of these discussions and deliberation before the Central Khilafat when it meets early in October for the purpose of deciding the line of action it should adopt. The Khilafat Working Committee is most anxious to restore and even improve upon the excellent relation prevailing between the various communities in 1920 and 1921 and should like to emphasise that it further depends to a very great extent upon the response that is received to this earnest invitation from your organisation. I trust that it will be received by you in the spirit of sincere co-operation in which it is addressed to you".

Source :
Ansari Papers

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LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI TO DR. M.A. ANSARI

Bombay
6th September 1928

My dear Ansari,

I reached here yesterday morning and wanted to write to you at once, but waited for Shuaib to return from Bhopal, where he had gone to see Abdur Rahman.[1] He came by mail the same evening. A letter to you under the present unfortunate circumstances is a painful business. I am sorry I could not stop for the night at Delhi as desired by you on the phone, and on second thought I consider a letter better than a personal talk. . . . We have had so many already.

You know the affection and regard we had for each other and any serious difference between us cannot be taken very lightly... at least by me. I had known your views last May and you also knew what opinions I held about Pt. Motilal Nehru's attitude over the Muslim reservation of seats. Only I did not know the extent to which you were going to utilise your peculiar position of vantage in favour of this change. We had an array of Hindu opinion against us. The Mahasabha was strongly opposed to the Madras resolution and to this was added the influence and opposition of Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Motilal. Last May you had honestly informed all in Bombay that personally you were always opposed to Muslim reservation of seats, but the Muslims did not generally agree with you. Shuaib Quraishi had, however, informed me of the pressure you were bringing over him and, I believe, on our other Muslim friends also. And as the matter was under

1. Shuaib Quraishi and Abdur Rahman were old Aligarians and very active members of the Khilafat Committee.

discussion, I had hoped against hope that wiser counsels woul prevail in the end and the general Muslim view would be accepte by our co-workers and the Committee. Shuaib Quraishi had sen me a wire from Allahabad saying that "Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, S. Ali Imam,[2] Mr. Chintamani,[3] Mr. Sachchetanand Sinha Mr. Ishwar Saran,[5] Maulana Shafi Daudi, Tassaduq Sherwan

1. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru (1875-1949) was educated at Agra an practised Law at the Allahabad High Court. He was a Memb of the U.P. Legislative Council, 1913-16; Member Imperi Legislative Council 1916-20; Member All-India Congre Committee 1906-1917; Law Member of the Governor General' Executive Council 1922; attended the Round Table Conference 1930-31-32.
2. Sir Ali Imam (1869-1932) was educated in Patna and was calle to the Bar in 1890. He was appointed the Law Member of th Executive Council of the Governor-General in 1910. Acted judge of the Patna High Court in 1917 and Chief Minister o Hyderabad, 1919. He was nominated in 1920 as the first India representative to sit at the first meeting of the League o Nations. Knighted in 1910; C.S.I. in 1911 and K.C.S.I. i 1914.
3. C.Y. Chintamani (1880-1941) was one of the finest journalist of pre-independence days. He edited the *Leader* and the *India People* and also helped in editing the *Hindustan Review.* H became a Minister of Education and Industries of the Unite Provinces Government from 1921-23.
4. Sachchidanand Sinha (1871-1950) was educated in Patna an England. He had the good fortune of having the company c Ali Imam, Hasan Imam, Mazhar-ul-Haq, M.A. Jinnah, Lal Har Kishan Lal, Shah Din and Gandhiji. He was President the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee during 1916-20. H held moderate views.
5. Ishwar Saran (1874-1974). He was a nationalist; organised th U.P. Provincial Congress Committee in 1918. Parliamentar Government was his ideal and he tried his best to get through constitutional means. In the last years of his life h devoted to the uplift of Harijans.

Khaliquzzaman, Abul Kalam Azad,[6] Dr. Mehmood[7] and himself had attended the committee meeting, supported reservation of seats on population basis for ten years. Pt. Motilal followed by Mr. Anney, Sardar Mangal Singh, Pt. Malaviya were adament, formula leaving decision on Conference was agreed. No agreement on separation of Sindh. Pt. Motilal virtually adopting Mahasabha formula" I realised the unfortunate situation and informed Mahatmaji what I thought about the matter. I suppose your later efforts succeeded in converting the other ten supporters of the reservation of seats to your point of view. I still hoped that at Lucknow, the committee would realise the Muslim strength for which absolutely no canvassing was done, as you yourself would admit, while on the other hand you continued your exertions amongst the Moslems to convert them to accept your views. So much so that every effort was made to bring pressure even on me to accept the Nehru Committee decision, and sacrifice the interest of Muslims which I fear were terribly neglected. I watched the Conference and expected upto the last that it would rectify the mistake but it proved a great disappointment. The spirit displayed in the conference was most painful and heart-rending and I did not want to create a scene. All the same with quiet dignity, frankness and strength we made our statements...on about the Dominion Status and Independence, stating frankly that the Central Khilafat Committee had declared for Independence and we adhered to that decision and reserved to ourself fullest freedom to work and fight for it. On the reservation of seat question I also said in my statement on behalf of the Central Khilafat Committee that we stood by

6. Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958) received purely traditional education; opposed to British imperialism in India and elsewhere in the world. He started the *Al-Hilal* in 1912 and *Al-Balagh* in 1915. From 1920 to 1945 jail became his home and he fought tooth and nail for the independence of the country.
7. Dr. Syed Mahmud (1889-1971) was educated at Aligarh and Cambridge Universities. He took his Ph. D. from Germany and called to the Bar from Lincoln's Inn. He started practice at the Patna High Court. From the beginning he was a Congress man and fought for the independence of the country. After the independence he was appointed Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs (1952-57).

the decision, made on the 27th August when by an overwhelming majority it decided in favour of reservation of seats for the Punjab and also supported amendments which Maulana Shafi Daudi proposed on its behalf. I saw the fate of those amendments and described them absolutely true but rather painful language in my statement published in the *Hamdard* of 4th instant. I write this letter to tell you how very painful this wrench is to me. You had been a friend and a brother to me and I have received so many kindness from you that I can hardly ever hope to thank you sufficiently of them. But you will admit the last few months have made it difficult for us to have the same consideration and trust in each other as we had before. Let us pray to God that the great Healer and time may bring us together again. You have every right to stand by your views and propagate them and I reserve the same position for myself. My loyalty to you had kept me silent so far, but the interests of Islam and Motherland stand above everything else.

I have just glanced through a message sent by you to the press in the *Indian National Herald* and that makes it clear that we are both free to act as we think best. I stand by the Delhi proposals; I stand by the Calcutta A.I.C.C. meeting decision; I firmly stand by the Madras Congress resolution and the Muslim League resolution which you had also supported along with us. It is you who have changed while the Central Khilafat Committee and I stand where we were, not in a spirit of obstinacy but because we consider Pt. Motilal and Nehru Committee have intentionally or unintentionally, treated Muslim point of view with undeserved contempt. I only hope your share, in giving them encouragement, was not such as would cause pain to your friends and co-workers and the general Muslim public. As for the undue pressure brought on the Punjab Khilafatists to change their repeatedly and strongly expressed convictions, on the disputed points, the less said the better.

It is so easy to play the generous liberal minded patriot at the expense of ones own people. For the time being it pays and gains the applause and I congratulate Maulana Abul Kalam Azad on the part he played in this affair. The true facts will be out in the long run and the Muslims of India will realise how their sacred cause had been betrayed by those whom they trusted.

I have shown this letter to Shuaib Quraishi and am sending a copy of it to Mohammad Ali also. You are perfectly free to show

this letter to any body you like or publish it or criticise it as you like. We both reserve the fullest freedom in our actions and I have every hope that neither you nor I would hit below the belt in this unfortunate affairs. Pt. Motilal ruined the non-cooperation movement and while touring in India to organize the country for the Civil Disobedience, walked quietly into the Legislative Assembly and Councils taking the oath of allegience, and what was worst induced others also to get into that 'parlour' including our revered leader the late Hakim Ajmal Khan Sahib. You stood firm then. How he has dealt with the unfortunate Swaraj Party is known to the country. This time it is the Congress and the first fruit of his activity is further disruption amongst the Moslems. Well, Muslims of India will have to organise themselves, defend their rights more efficiently and after all the final decision rests in their hands.

Sorry to inflict this long letter on you,

Yours affectionately,

(Sd.) SHAUKAT ALI

.S.

I am sorry Mohammad Ali was away in Europe. His presence would certainly have made the Nehru Committee pause and probably would have avoided some of the grave blunders it has made. In one way I am glad also... there were no unpleasant scenes at Lucknow. Inspite of provocation, we Muslims kept our dignity and are now free to reconsider the whole position carefully and dispassionately. It does require urgent reconsideration after what we saw at Lucknow.

(Sd.) S. ALI

Source :
A. I. C. C. (Supplementary Papers) F. No. G-60/1928, List No. 105/ 1928.

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LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO THE PRIME MINISTER OF ENGLAND, FROM LONDON

Hyde Park Hotel,
London

1st January, 1931

To,

The Prime Minister,

Sir,

It is with a desire to place my views on record before His Majesty's Government and before the British Parliamentary delegates as well as the Indian delegates (who to some extent already know my views) that I have solicited the favour of your kindly sending me my old friend Sir Geoffrey Corbett of Chhindwara fame to be present when notes could be taken down of what I said on the subject of my views about minorities of which committee I am a member.

In the first place it is a misnomer to call the Hindu-Muslim question a question of minorities. There are certainly minorities in India, and we must provide for them in such a way that they should feel that the future Government of India is not going to be a Government only for one or two communities, but the Government of all Indians irrespective of creed and caste. Nevertheless the one hitch in the way of the recognition of India's responsibility with a government of her own is the question not of these minorities but the deep-seated differences that divide the Hindus and the Muslims. The fact is so obvious that I need not go into history, nor even present statistics; but I wish to emphasise one or two points which will distinguish the case of Hindus and Muslims from the case of the minorities. First of all the Muslims ruled over India from the beginning of the 8th century to about the middle of the 19th, in one way or another,

and in one region or another, which no other community can claim in the same manner. The Sikh rule for a generation in the solitary province of the Punjab, the result of an accident - I say this without any derogation of the valour of the Sikhs and of the high respect I feel for their organization as a panth - nor the depredations of the Mahrattas and their confederacy, are any parallel to the history of the Muslims in India. Whether by conquest or by diplomacy the Muslim rule had passed finally from the hands of the Muslims to those of the British, barring of course the rule of the Indian States, many of which remain from time immemorial, great and distinguished Hindu principalities tracing their origin even from the sun and the moon. Whatever the relations of the Muslim power as suzerian or as the paramount power to these Hindu States, there is not the least doubt that they retained not only for the most part a deep feeling of loyalty towards the Muslim power, but also a degree of independence which they have more recently lost since the transference of Muslim power into British hands. Other States are, of course, the creation of the times during the break-up of the Mughal Empire which have been recognised by the British. Some, like Hyderabad, were larger powers at the time of the original treaties than the East India Company of which they became faithful allies and others were smaller, but with that I am not at present concerned.

What I desire to sketch is that rightly or wrongly the Muslim community ruled over India in one way or another from the 8th to the middle of the 19th century in some part of the country or another and that no other community has anything like that record.

A very important result of that which we have to deal to-day is the feeling created by the record of Muslim rule for so long over so large a part of India. There is hardly a community that has not a real or an imaginary grievance against the old Muslim rulers and what we know of human nature elsewhere brings it home to us that even to-day there is a feeling of "revanche" harboured against the Muslims in the minds of some Hindus and some members of other community whether Sikh or Mahratta or Rajput. It is with this feeling that we must deal, and against which we must provide safeguards for the future when framing a constitution for an ideal Indian Government in which all would feel safe, equal and free.

The next consideration is that the Muslims constitute not a minority in the sense in which the last war and its sequel has

habituated us to consider European minorities. The League of Nations deals with minorities and our Indian savants and professors easily borrow maxims from the League of Nations and its dealings with minorities and with mandates and want to guide India from Geneva when in reality it is India itself that can provide far better guidance for Geneva. A community that in India alone must now be numbering more than 70 millions cannot easily be called a minority in the sense of Geneva minorities, and when it is remembered that this community numbers nearly 400 millions of people throughout the world, whose ambition is to convert the rest of mankind to their way of thought and their outlook on life, and who claim and feel a unique brotherhood; to talk of it as a minority is a mere absurdity.

Keeping these two main facts in mind let us now proceed with the problem that we have before us. It was proposed by a member of the Hindu Mahasabha in the Round Table Conference delegation that the Prime Minister should act as an arbitrator between the two communities, which was no doubt very flattering to the Prime Minister, but which would have made his position far too invidious, and he naturally declined the offer with thanks, and I feel certain that he must have seen through the motive that prompted the suggestion. We have heard suggestions of the matter being referred to the League of Nations. That would mean washing the dirty linen of India before the whole world. As it is, we are disgusted with the fact that the Indian Round Table Conference has been made the Dhobi Talao (the washerman's tank) of Indian communalism. This question should have been settled in India. We who worked for ten years through thick and thin with Gandhiji pressed that upon him, but the desire of retaining Hindu popularity for himself and for Pandit Motilal Nehru (who, I am sorry, is absent) prevented a settlement. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru tried his utmost to have a Hindu-Muslim settlement when the Congress at our urgent request in December 1928 failed to do so and Sir S.P. Patro was most keen. But the Hindu Mahasabha pretended to share this desire with the Liberal Hindus and the Muslims at first and after postponing meeting after meeting absolutely refused to take any part in the Conference at Bombay and Dr. Moonje was quite frank about his refusal to do anything to arrive at a settlement in India before the Round Table Conference. The Congress followed the Hindu Mahasabha in refusing even to come to the Round Table Conference for a settlement when a settlement was inevitable before an Indian constitution could be framed. But three members of the

Hindu Mahasabha nevertheless came over, and in spite of every effort of Muslim and the Hindu Liberals have defeated the settlement so far. It is not for me to say how much time they have usurped in all these conciliatory talks both among the Hindus and Muslims themselves and with the Prime Minister. I think the Prime Minister can judge that better for himself. Now that a formal committee has been formed for this purpose it is essential that the case for a settlement should be clearly stated.

In the first place, I would like with the greatest courtesy and friendliness to warn the Prime Minister that it is not a case of the Punjab or Bengal, as he seems to imagine, nor of reducing the figure of 110 in the Punjab to 100 or anything like it, as he seems to think when he was making his conciliatory efforts at the Chequers. The entire question is, as I suggested in my speech in the Plenary Conference, that for the first time in the history of India we intend to introduce into India majority rule, and those who have been usurping the control of the destinies of those called Hindus for so many thousands of years do not want that there should be any majority Indian or Hindu except that which they can control precisely as they have controlled the Hindus for thousands of years. Let me add that there is one important difference. Sir John Simon is somewhat out of date when he refers like the late Sir Valentine Chirol to Brahman rule. The Brahman had at least taught the people and had at least the mistaken notion that they brought salvation to people in the next world. The small monopolistic caste that desires to remain in control of the destinies of the Hindu community and that being the majority community of the Indian nation as a whole through it,- is the case not so much of Dr. Moonje and Raja Narendra Nath, but of the *bania* who has no conception of the salvation of anybody in the next world, nor even of the teaching of anyone in this. I am more anxious than any Indian perhaps to get rid of foreign incubus, if I may be forgiven to say so, of "a nation of shopkeepers" controlling our destinies. But as I wrote to His Excellency the Viceroy in reply to the invitation of His Majesty's Government to me to this Conference, I do not wish to create a home-made incubus of a caste of shopkeepers of our own. To my mind the agitation to-day is being financed - and partly for selfish reasons by the banias of Bombay and Gujarat, and although I have always laughingly said I do not care a tuppenny damn for 1/4 or 1/6, the fight to-day is not so much for the freedom of India as for 1/4 against 1/6. This may be entirely

justified but it is not the fight for India's freedom in its larger sense.

Now to deal with the Hindu-Muslim problem. It is not a provincial question. In every province Hindu and Muslim sentiment vis-a-vis each other is more or less the same. The Muslims lost the control of India nearly three generations ago and the British gained it mostly from the Muslims, though to some extent from the Mahrattas who were the Mayors of the Palace in Delhi and partly from the Sikhs in the Punjab whom the British themselves encouraged to rule there against the Muslims because of their own war with Afghanistan. Now India wants to regain that control, and the Muslims, as we showed ten years ago, have not been lacking in self-sacrifice for this purpose. To-day some Muslims are still taking part in the Congress movement, but they are men who are doing it more out of the habit of freedom than otherwise. Many have kept away from the movement of Civil Disobedience as they had kept away from non-co-operation ten years ago, even when Turkey was involved in the question. Without exaggerating our own importance we can say that it is not these people, many of whom have been selected as delegates to the Indian Round Table Conference by His Majesty's Government or by the Government of India, or by Local Governments and officers - whoever does it - that have exercised much influence in keeping the Muslims away from joining the Congress again as they did with us ten years ago. Even though we have to say it, it is we who had to fight the battle practically in every province, and to a very large extent indeed we succeeded in keeping the Muslims out, because we showed to them that the last movement was a truly national movement, while in the present movement I regret to have to say in their absence, Gandhi and Pandit Motilal Nehru have both surrendered for the sake of their popularity to the Hindu Mahasabha. Now that we have come here, I am the only representative of my party - in spite of my long correspondence with His Excellency the Viceroy on the subject while I was lying ill in India before the final selection was made - to represent it in the Round Table Conference, and more than any one else among the Muslims it will be I - and of course my brother - who on our return will be asked by the millions of Muslims what we have brought back for the Muslims. Well, we want to go back not with separate electorates only, nor with weightage only for the Muslims but with freedom for India including freedom for the Muslims and unless we can secure that, I can assure

the Prime Minister that the Muslims of India will join the Civil Disobedience Movement without the least hesitation no matter what we may say and what the other Muslim Delegates may say.

Freedom for India is not separate electorates, though being one of the authors of the separate electorates in 1906, I shall be the last to surrender them. Let me first say what is the use of separate electorates. A separate electorate gives to the Muslim client in the case he is fighting the counsel that he selects himself and can trust. In every law court every client is permitted to do that even though sometimes he is provided with counsel at Government expense. The other party is certainly never allowed to choose his counsel for him. If there had been an independent and impartial judge all that we would have needed would have been a trustworthy counsel, and that was just that was provided a generation ago for us so wisely by Lords Morley and Minto. There was no idea in the mind of Lord Morley to give India anything but a Parliamentary British Government. There was the official block. There was in the Government of India the British official majority and it was admittedly kept there to show that there was no idea of the introduction of Parliamentary Government into India. Each community presented its case as a client before the judge and it was the judge that decided. We could only influence, never guide and advise him. Therefore all that was needed was a trustworthy counsel selected by the client himself which we did through the separate electorates.

Even then somehow by accident, if not by design, Lord Minto had provided not only the needs of the present, but also something for the prospects of the future. The separate electorates had been provided only to *supplement*, though to a very large extent, the deficiency that the Muslims were expected to encounter through the narrowness of the Hindu majority in their representation through the general territorial electorates. Lord Morley had not deprived the Muslims of their share in the mixed electorates themselves. That was a fatal mistake that was made at the urgent suggestion of our Hindu friends in 1916 at Lucknow when we two brothers were interned in Chhindwara and could take no part in the politics of the Lucknow Muslim League and the Congress. For the first time separate electorates became the only resource for Muslim representation.

Another grave mistake, that was then made, for which the Muslims have now been crying for the last 14 years was the sub-

stitution of Muslim minorities in the Punjab and in Bengal for the small Muslim majorities. Had our friends the least vision of the future they would not have given the Punjab a practical and Bengal a deliberate and a small minority. It is to *rectify these mistakes that the Round Table Conference is practically being held. Let there be no mistake about it.* This is what His Majesty's Government and the Prime Minister should primarily understand. It is with this that I should have begun this long dissertation; but I am glad I have come to it now after *clearing the site for laying down the foundation* and I will not take very long. The real problem before us is to give full power to Muslims in such provinces as those in which they are in a majority, whether small or large, and protection to them in such provinces as those in which they are in a minority, and in order to be absolutely fair to the Hindu community also, precisely the same thing must be done with the Hindus. What is needed is to give power to a community which is in majority in any province no matter how small or how large it may be, and protection to it in a province no matter how large or small it may be. The Mussulmans desire - *and this is the crux of their 14 points* and not *separate electorates* - that there should be federal government so that the central unitary Government with a permanent Hindu majority should not override them every where; they should have at least a third of the British Indian representation in the Federal Government, that in the province of the Punjab and Bengal where they have small majorities in population which are unorganised, and greatly controlled by the Banyas and the Sikhs and the Hindu landlords, as in Bengal, those majorities should be reserved (personally I shall be satisfied if for a number of years only such as 20); that in the N.W.F.P. and in Baluchistan (which is only nominally a Province) where there are clearly huge Muslim majorities full reforms should be extended to the Muslims which have so far been denied by the combination of British, military and civil domination and Hindu narrowness characteristically supporting it, and that Sind should be made a separate small province like Assam; and that the Muslims should be allowed to have their majorities in all these as the Hindus have everywhere else. Unless in these few provinces Muslim majorities are established by the new constitution, I submit, not as a *threat,* but as a very humble and friendly *warning,* there will be civil war in India. *Let there be no mistake about that.* These are the four or five Provinces where the Muslims should have precisely the same *power* as the Hindus

have everywhere else, and the Hindus should have the same *protection* as the Muslims demand where they are in minorities.

In the Punjab and Bengal where the Muslim majorities are only 6 and 5 it *is absolutely impossible* to give any weightage to the Sikhs or to the Europeans, and neither of them needs weightage, as I shall presently explain. The whole idea has been created in order to rob the Muslims of their small majorities in the only two large Provinces where their population gives it to them, the franchise in both these Provinces, *whether equal for all communities or not* - this is not a religious or an ethical question about which there should be no rigidity and no fetish, and at present there is no rigidity about the franchise about the different communities in India (compare the franchise about the Council of State to-day) - should be such as to give the Mussulmans as many voters at least as their population ratio, and in any case their seats should at least for 20 years be reserved in the same proportion for them because they are indebted to the Hindu banias and too much under the influence of the Sikh *noveau richi.* The Nehru Report very ingeniously tried to fool the Mussulmans by talking of adult franchise. Nobody can be more in favour of adult franchise than a true Mussulman. But fortunately or unfortunately women become adults as well as men, and for 20 years at least Muslim women when they become adults will not go to the polling booths even if the best *purdah* arrangements are made for them, and only *purdah* officers supervise over their voting. In comparison with the Aryas, other Hindus and Sikhs in the Punjab, the Muslim women are bound to suffer. Therefore adult franchise is out of the question. In these two Provinces of the Punjab and Bengal, no consideration should go against the Muslim demand of a majority of 56 per cent. and 55 per cent. respectively in the entire House.

The Sikhs had acquired in that one generation of rule so much land in the Punjab and they exercise such control over the poor tenants and others in the villages to this day, that they need absolutely no protection. Time after time they have themselves said that if the Mussulmans give up "communalism" in the interests of "nationalism," they too would give up communalism and abide by the results of the general territorial elections. Robbed of all false sentiment this means that they do need protection in the same way as the Mussulmans do, and therefore the idea of providing

weightage for them is wholly unnecessary and is a Hindu Mahasabha fiction.

The same may be said of the Europeans in Bengal. It is not for a few seats more or less in the Bengal Council only that they would keep their control over commerce that they have acquired since the John Company. We must provide for that in some other way, and I suggest that the Instrument of Instructions for the Governor of Bengal should provide that nothing should be done in India to wreak revenge against Europeans whatever Indians may feel for the past. A mere weightage of 3 or 10 per cent will not help them. It will be absolutely ineffective. What it will do will be to rob the Mussulmans of their majority in another of the only two provinces in which at present they are a majority in the population and have reforms.

With regard to the Frontier Province I say nothing, because the Frontier Committee is already dealing with the matter and my own suggestion is that the Muslims should give the Hindus and the Sikhs not only twice as much representations as the latter's population but three times as much, so that the Hindus and the Sikhs should feel that the province is their own as well as the Mussulmans and that they have a share in the government of the Province. That is the kind of thing that the Mussulman should feel in Dr. Moonje's Province where he is only 4 per cent. or in Madras where he is only 7 per cent. or in Orissa when it is to be separated when he will be in an equally small proportion. *It must be remembered that the feeling for or against the Mussulmans in every Province is practically the same*, and when it is so bitter in the Punjab it is not likely to be less bitter in Provinces like Dr. Moonje's where he is in very small numbers and practically a Hindu Government will rule over him. *The fear is that the idea of revenge is too much in the minds of our young men who have been mistaught Indian History chiefly for political reasons.*

It is only in the Indian States where history is not taught but it is still being made by the Princes and made in a human manner in spite of the weakness of Princes, to which I must refer as a confirmed republican, but true protection is offered to be found for the Mussulmans.

Let me in passing refer to the fact that the Mussulman has not been made excessively popular to any other minority either by 1,250

years of rule that he has exercised. Some have a grievance against him because he conquered Persia! Some have a grievance against him because he conquered Byzantium, Syria and Egypt and did not lose Palestine in the Crusades! At any rate, whosoever has ruled over India, whether it be the English or the Mussulman is bound in some way to suffer from real or imaginary grievances of his old subjects.

It is remarkable that the Mussulman suffer much less from it than the British. The British can be the best judge of this feeling of revenge against him, and in making a new constitution they must provide against that feeling for at least a number of years.

I come now to the subject of protection for the minorities. Many of the 14 points provide for this, such as a veto given to two-thirds of the Hindu and Muslim minorities in any legislative or other elected body against the discussion or passage of any bill, resolution, or part thereof, which is considered by it to be against its *interests*. This is the historic provision made by the Congress when the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan of Aligarh was being invited in 1887 to join the Congress by Mr. Badruddin Tyabji, the other distinguished Mussulman who had joined the Congress. A provision that the Parliament of India before it was recognised and had any real power except to debate, willingly legislated should not now be objected to when the Parliament of India is being recognised and being given effective power. *I insist that the words should be copied from the Congress Constitution itself.*

It must be remembered that this provision is not for the protection of any *religion* but of *communal interests* only. *Religion* must be above law, and I am sorry I had just been out of the Plenary Committee when the Prime Minister asked us about the Federal Committee's report whether we should note the point that no legislation should be introduced affecting the religion or religious rites and usages of any of His Majesty's subjects without the previous assent of the Governor. Already much mischief has been done by that provision on account of the passage of the Sarda Act for which although it had been passed, no assent was ever taken, the assent being given for a purely.........Bill as originally introduced. I have not the least objection if the Hindus or members of any other *progressive* religion desire to legislate about their religions. But my religion is *not* "progressive". It claims divine legislation, as I have

shown in the statement presented on the 9th November 1929, to His Excellency the Viceroy by the deputation of Muslim Ulama and leaders which I led before His Excellency of which I submit a copy with this statement of mine. Matters of such importance must not be rushed through in such hurry, AND WHEN OPPORTUNITY ARISES AGAIN I SHALL SEE TO IT THAT AT LEAST MUSLIM RELIGION IS PLACED ABOVE HUMAN LEGISLATION WHETHER BY THE INDIAN OR BY THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT. WITHOUT THAT NO MUSSULMAN CAN UNDERTAKE TO BE LOYAL TO ANY CONSTITUTION!

I would say one word only with reference to the weightage that the Muslims enjoy and desire to enjoy in every province where they are in such meagre minorities. Nowhere does that weightage give them a majority. As Shakespeare says about the Jews, it can be said of minorities that sufferance is the badge of the tribe! But everywhere weightage gives them a certain amount of influence. And the need of that influence is realised by no one more than by myself who, through my illness, have had the whole of my party unrepresented in the Minorities Committee and elsewhere at present. Weightage will give to the community just so excessively represented only the idea that it has a share in the governance of the country and no more. The same weightage that the Muslims claim they are prepared to give to the Hindus in every Province in which the Hindus are in a similar minority. But to claim weightage for the Hindus of Bengal or of the Punjab where the minority is in reality better organised and in every way more powerful politically than the majority more wealthy and better educated is an absurdity. The same is true of the Sikhs in the Punjab, who, apart from every other consideration, are socially Hindus and have politically been working with them. In Sind the Hindu minority is better organised and richer and better educated than the Mussulmans in spite of their being big landlords, and yet I would give them a weightage as large as could satisfy the biggest gourmand.

Let it not be understood that I am a communalist in the sense in which communalism has been understood in Europe. Although nearly a generation ago I was one of the authors of the separate electorate. I have felt that the time for it has passed, and that we should now have, in the interest of Indian nationalism, a mixed territorial electorate. *But a territorial electorate in India of the type of England is an absurdity*. In the province, say of Dr. Moonje, or of Nawab Sir

Abdul Qayum, where the minority communities number only 4 and 7 per cent. respectively, the minorities have no chance of getting their true representatives elected even if 20 seats are reserved for them, if 96% or 93% of the rival community are to be allowed to choose *their* representatives. Men of straw, men are merely *religiously* Hindu or Muslim, but not *politically* so, will be returned by the votes of politically Muslim and Hindu majorities.

I have therefore after long cogitation and consultation with friends devised a plan. It is certainly far more deserving of consideration than Major Atlee's plan discussed in the Simon Report. It is this. Let the seats be reserved for the two communities but let no candidate be declared elected unless he secures:

(1) at least 40 per cent. of votes cast of his own community; and

(2) at least 5 per cent. of the votes cast of other communities wherever he is in a minority or 10 or less per cent. and 10 per cent. where he is in a larger minority or in a majority.

In this way *three* purposes will be served. In the *first* instance, every candidate will have to go cap in hand to both the communities as in the Minto-Morley Reforms which he does not do to-day; and the rank abuse of sister communities which goes on to-day since the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, which had ruined Indian politics, and even social life, will cease. *Secondly*, no man would be returned to represent any community who does not represent at least a fair percentage of that community though not necessarily its majority as in the separate electorates to-day. The *third* purpose which is no less important is that ordinarily no person who is not in the least a *persona grata* to a sister community will be able to get returned even if he secures election from his own community. *Thus for the first time communalism will be killed* and true nationalism will get a chance. This is better than P.R. and distinctly better than the "list system". If, however, no candidate from a constituency satisfies either of these minima, the one that secures the largest votes cast of the community for which the seat is reserved must be returned. This will only be the relic of the present separate electorates which is unfortunately inevitable to-day. I do not want any more than that portion of separate electorates to be spared in the new national constitution that we are trying to frame this time in England. Without those conditions Mussulmans will never accept mixed electorates

in which a man of straw or even a false convert can be returned by the votes of 96 per cent. of the majority community in any province irrespective of the entire opposition of the community for which the candidate is standing for election as a representative. That will be an absurdity worse than any we have known.

I have explained this system both to His Excellency the Viceroy and to the Secretary of State for India and they were very gravely impressed with the sanity and ingenuity of the measure I proposed. I believe, I have a right to mention that Sir T.B. Sapru and the Right Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri have been equally impressed if not more.

With these words I close this statement of mine which has been dictated through the kindness of the Prime Minister and Sir Geoffrey Corbett in absolute defiance of my doctors who are greatly displeased with the liberty I have taken, and yet if I had not taken this liberty I should have disobeyed them still more greatly and would have gone to the Conference to put this case before the Committee and the Conference even if I died. I beg the Prime Minister and the Committee not to ignore this lengthy *screed* but to give it some consideration at least. I can assure them that it represents the views of *many scores of millions of Muslims* whose voice may not be heard in the Indian Round Table Conference but whose sentiments cannot be ignored by the Indian administrators as I feel sure Sir Geoffrey Corbett who has been present throughout know well enough himself.

I remain,

Yours obediently,

(Sd.) MOHAMED ALI

Source:
Indian Round Table
Conference 12th Nov., 1930-19th Jan. 1931 Appendix I, Vol III.

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LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI TO MR. MIEVILLE, SECRETARY TO VICEROY

(Unpublished)

THE CENTRAL KHILAFAT COMMITTEE (INDIA)

BOMBAY
10th August 1933

Dear Mr. Mieville,

In the interest of the conversation about the present situation in India with His Excellency the Viceroy yesterday, I quite forgot to mention to His Excellency a private matter concerning myself.

As you and His Excellency were aware that I had been an officer in the superior grades of Public Service (Opium Department Cultivation) for 17 years and retired prematurely, so that I could serve my faith and people. I had put in 17 years of meritorious service. Shortly after, unfortunately, the relations between England and Turkey and Germany and the other, thus straining the religious feelings of the British Muslim subjects severely to breaking point. Both my late brother Maulana Mohamed Ali and myself were interned and were not released till about the end of December 1919.

I had drawn this pension of Rs. 1800 a year after my retirement for over 7 years and all through my internment up to the 31st of May 1919. I have not drawn it since the 1st June 1919 to this day *i.e.* for over 14 years. Along with other Indian Muslims, both of us had felt very strongly against the British policy of weakening Muslims States. But I am glad that there has been a great change since then, and I hope never again such a catastrophe would happen and force a Muslim to give up his loyalty to temporal power for the sake of his faith and religious conviction. When my late brother and myself saw the happy change, we began co-operation with the

Government and went to the Round Table Conference, and there tried our best to bring about an honourable peace between India and England. And after my brother's death I have been carrying on the same policy, viz., to make peace between Muslims and Muslims, between Muslims and other communities, between England and India and between England and Islam.

His Excellency knows the whole case, and several times when I had the honour of an interview with him, His Excellency asked me why I was not claiming and drawing my pension. I always answered that *I will apply for it when suitable time* come. Now there is a fair chance of the Muslims and others coming together to work the new constitution. I wanted to ask His Excellency yesterday, if I could apply to get my pension which I had not drawn. It is due as I said before, for a little over 14 years. As you know a pension is a part of the salary deferred to help officers in their old age when they needed rest and support, I have a right to it.

I want to apply for it now if His Excellency would kindly support my claim as he had several times mentioned. I would also like to know if I ought to apply to His Excellency or request the Home Department of the Government of India.

I would be greatly obliged if you will kindly put this letter before His Excellency and let me know His Excellency's wishes as early as possible, so that I may take the right step.

Yours very sincerely,

(Sd.) SHAUKAT ALI

Source :
Home Department, 1933.

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LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI TO SIR HARRY HAIG

(*Unpublished*)

Khilafat House
Bombay 10
15/8/33

Dear Sir Harry Haig,

Under instructions from His Excellency the Viceroy I am forwarding my application for my small pension which I have not drawn since 1st June 1919.

The application, along with the two enclosures, would explain everything, and I have every confidence that you will help me in expediting the matter.

I would be very grateful,

With best wishes,

I remain,
Yours sincerely.
(Sd.) SHAUKAT ALI

Source :
Home Department, 1933.

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LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI TO THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, HOME DEPARTMENT

(*Unpublished*)

Khilafat House
Bombay 10
15/8/33

To,

The Secretary,
to the Government of India,
(Home Department)
Simla.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward to you the enclosed copy of the letter I wrote to H.E. The Viceroy and a copy of his reply to me, for your information.

I have been an officer in the Opium Department (Cultivation) and retired before my time from Banares after I had served 17 years with credit in this department. I was granted a small pension of Rs. 150/- per month which I had accepted as I had made up my mind to devote the rest of my life to the service of my faith and my Muslim people. I had drawn my pension from the day of retirement up to the 31st May 1919, part of which period I had spent in internment along with my brother, the late Maulana Mohamed Ali. My enclosed letter will give reasons for what I did and I need not refer to the matter here. However, I am convinced now that better times are coming and that there will be a fair understanding between the people of India and the British people. Having been convinced of the good-will of the vast majority of the British people, both my

late brother and myself had willingly co-operated for the welcome cause of peace and I have been doing my best for it. Both H.E. the Viceroy and other friends/English and Indians, had asked me as to why I had not drawn my pension from the 1st June 1919 to this day, and I told them that I would do so when the proper time came.

With the new constitution on the anvil, I feel that I should give my fullest co-operation to bring about a good and honourable understanding, not only between Muslims and Muslims, Hindus and Muslims, and other communities but also between India and England and remove any doubt about my giving fullest co-operation.

I hope the Government will sanction the payment of all the money due to me from the 1st June 1919 to this day and after that I will draw my pension monthly in the usual way.

My record of work as an official in the Opium Department was not only blameless but I was repeatedly mentioned for meritorious work.

An early reply would be obliged,

I have the honour to be,
Your most obedient servant,
(Sd.) SHAUKAT ALI

Source :
Home Department, 1933.

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LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI TO SIR HARRY HAIG

(*Unpublished*)

THE CENTRAL KHILAFAT COMMITTEE (INDIA)

BOMBAY 12th October 1933

Sir Harry Haig,
Home Department,

SIMLA

RE: No. D.O.D-5599/33

Dear Sir Harry Haig,

Thank you for your letter of 6th October and the enclosure saying that the Governor-General-in-Council has sanctioned the restoration of my pension of Rs. 150/-per month from 1st October, 1933.

I was much pained by this decision as it is likely to damage the very purpose I had in view when I decided to accept the kind offer repeatedly made to me by His Excellency the Viceroy. I wanted at this juncture to give a practical proof to the country that I was fully determined to co-operate with the Government in working the new reforms, and thus make a bridge for a honourable peace between England and India at this critical time. I am afraid you have not (put before the Viceroy) all the facts placed before you. In my application to the Home Department I was very brief and did not want to touch upon things that had better not be remembered on either side. I had been a rebel and an outlaw because of religious convictions and I hope in future no such unfortunate political events would occur to disturb our relations.

The Government of India knew my position and all about my work yet they continued to give me my pension even after my

internment, from 1915 to 31st May 1919, and then when my brother and myself were sent to Betul Jail under regulation 111 of 1818 we were allowed a special allowance much bigger than my pension which was suspended. After our release from Betul, I, as President of the Khilafat Conference headed a deputation to His Excellency the Viceroy and then put in our side of the case for the Khilafat religious movement, and my brother the late Maulana Mohamed Ali was sent as head of another deputation to England. Though we were punished for breaking the law of the country our case was so strong that the Government of India and the Secretary of State, Mr. Montague, fought on behalf of the Muslims and had the treaty of Sevres revised at Lausanne. Our attitute changed after that when we realized that England was trying to come to an honourable understanding with Islam and the Muslims. So much so that in 1930 the Viceroy invited my brother Maulana Mohamed Ali to go as member of the Round Table Conference and after that I was invited to take his place.

I would have asked for my pension at any moment but I did not do so as those who were fighting the Government and attacking us Muslims, would have said that our opposition of the Civil Disobedience Movement was due to money considerations. We have lived down all opposition through our upright character and have chosen the proper time for applying to His Excellency the Viceroy for its restoration, so that every one may know that we were going to co-operate with the Government in working the new reforms.

I have right to this pension, which is, after all, nothing but a part of my salary and I expected that the Government would make the correct gesture and give it back to me from the day it was discontinued.

I am afraid that if this decision comes to be known it will not be good for government either in the eyes of Muslims or of others and I want to avoid any cause that may have unpleasant results.

I would have written about this to His Excellency and to other friends, official and non-official, but as the case is in your hands I take the liberty of approaching you first with all these facts so that you may reconsider the matter and do me justice. A few thousand rupees this way or that do not much matter but I think that the cause we have at heart should not be jeopardized by such a trifling sum.

I hope you will kindly reconsider the matter and help me to the best of your ability. I shall see you in Delhi when I come there by the end of this month. In any case for the sake of all-round peace for which I have been working I cannot refuse the offer which you have made.

I need not write more but I hope you will appreciate what I have written and will help me in this effort that I am making in the interest of Islam and India and for bringing better relataion between the peoples of England and India.

I hope this finds you well,

Yours sincerely,
Sd./-SHAUKAT ALI

Source :
Home Department, 1933.

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LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI TO SIR HARRY HAIG

Khilafat House
Bombay
2nd December 1933

Dear Sir Harry Haig,

In continuation of our conversation at Delhi I gave you the true date when wisdom dawned on us and we become sane politicians. My brother signed the joint manifesto of Indian leaders on the 1st November 1929. In December 1929 we met Mr. Gandhi at Lahore and we discussed the whole question frankly. Few days after in December 1929, the Khilafat Conference gave a clear lead by ordering us to accept the invitation to the Round Table Conference and bring about the honourable peace. So you can safely and correctly take the 1st January 1930 as the date, when we began active co-operation with the Government.

2. I would like to inform you that I want to draw my pension at Bombay, to whom should I apply.

Yours sincerely,
Sd./Shaukat Ali

Source :
Home Department, 1933

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LETTER FROM SHAUKAT ALI TO MOHAMED ALI

(*Unpublished*)

Guest House,
Bhopal State
12.9.1913

My dear boy,

As I wrote this, I suppose you will be nearing Suez.[1] I ought to have reached Delhi tonight but Her Highness[2] and the young prince detained me a day more. Her Highness sends her *Dua* to you and said that she will pray for you. I fully explained to her how you were being misrepresented by interested officials, who want a scape-goat for their own wrong doings. I left Bombay on the 10th at 5 P.M. train "Punjab Mail." Abdul Rahman[3] will reach Delhi......I have wired to Kutubuddin also to meet me in Delhi. So next week I will give you full news. I hope you are well and fit, take care of your health. Don't worry about the work here. I will write chatty articles for the *Comrade* also. Here are something that would please you. I

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1. Mohamed Ali took a delegation to England regarding the Kanpur Mosque question. Shaukat Ali wrote this letter to him when he reached Suez.
2. It refers to the Begum of Bhopal who was a great benefactor and admirer of the Ali Brothers.
3. Abdul Rahman Siddiqui was educated at Aligarh and was a close friend of the Ali Brothers. He worked on the staff of the *Comrade* and led an agitation against the internment of the Ali Brothers.

begged these 2 from Moulvi Shibli[4] next mail you will get all the papers. I had wired to Delhi to send you 40 copies of the last *Comrade* and *Hamdard* for the whole week. *Hamdard* is under 8 pages again......Calcutta meeting has already passed a note of confidence in you, other places I am sure would follow. I can't write a long letter this week but my next would be a long one, giving you all kinds of news......

Remember (1) You have got to write to me one letter chatty about things you see. (2) One leading article for the *Comrade*. (3) One *Gup*. Don't forget. I want Wazir Hasan to write also on political situation.

Look here, chip in and speak at meeting in the Home Rule Campaign. That way you will get a hearing......We all pray for you. My love to Majid, Koer and other Aligarh fellows.

Yours
(SHAUKAT)

Source :
Shaukat Ali Papers

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4. Shibli Numani (1857-1914) was a man of extra-ordinary calibre. He came to Aligarh in 1881 and was appointed Assistant Professor of Arabic. Sir Syed provided him a lodging and his library which benefited him immensely. In 1892 he took a tour to the Islamic countries. It considerably influenced him and created in him a sense of revolt against the British. He founded Nadvat-ul-Ulema in 1893-4 for religious education.

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LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO SHAUKAT ALI

(*Unpublished*)

Belgrave Mansions Hotel
Grosvenor Gardens, S.W.
October 24th 1913

My dear Shaukat,

It is no use my beginning with apologies every mail day, because I am confirmed by experience within the last three weeks that I shall be unable to do any work other than that for which we have come, namely, seeing the officials and other influential men with a view to make the friends of Islam and India more friendly and their enemies less hostile. I have been unable to keep up even that chatty letter which I began to write under the title of "A Fanatic Abroad". But I am certain that if you were here you would not say that this is due to idleness, though you know how idle I am by nature. Let me tell you what we are doing.

First, as regards India office, I believe I wrote to you last week that Montague[1] wrote us a bare refusal, without mentioning why, or indicating that we ought see him later on. Since then, I have been confirmed in my suspicions that we are being boycotted. Even Lord Crewe mentioned to the Aga Khan something about Rampur and the "Aligarh leaders" being opposed to our visit, and we can well understand that good friends of ours, Sir James Meston,

1. Edwin Montague (1879-1924) was Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister Mr. Asquith in 1908-10; Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for India, 1910-14; Secretary of State for India during 1917-22.

who did not wish us to prejudice him by forestalling him, has been prejudicing us by forestalling us. We are even informed that a hint has been given to the Press that our doings are not to be reported, and probably that our complaints should not be published. Sir James La Touche,[2] who was so charming and nice to us when he wanted us to get the Cawnpore difficulty solved, is now avoiding us, and has written to say that "I do not think that any object can be gained by my discussing the matter further with you and Syed Wazir Hasan. The incident is, I hope, closed finally, and Lord Hardinge's order dealt, no doubt, with all relevant details." This was with reference to my request that I may discuss with him the situation as regards the use of the Press Acts in the case of Moslem Papers, particularly in connection with Cawnpore affair. Well, I am not going to leave the matter here. Colonel Dunlop Smith[3] wrote to me on the 20th instant that he had just returned from his holidays and found my letter waiting for him, although I had clearly written on the cover that it was to be forwarded, and I know that other letters thus addressed to him were forwarded to him. Well I went to see him yesterday and was an hour and a half with him, in the course of which I told him all that had happened to me at Delhi on account of my action in the butcher's strike. I explained to him how the smallest local official, the moment he is opposed or criticised, begins to prejudice the higher officials against us, and how the higher officials believe everything that the lower officials say against us, or at least, pretend to believe it, in the name of that blessed word "prestige", and how the blunder of a single small official filters upwards and becomes a series of blunders of the higher officials, and thus of the

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2. Sir James La Touche (1844-) I.C.S., was appointed Settlement Officer in Ajmere and Gorakhpur; Commissioner in Burma. 1886; and of Allahabad, 1901; Additional Member of Governor-General's Legislative Council; officiated Lieut. Governor of U.P. in 1898 and acted as Lieut. Governor of Agra and Oudh since 1901.
3. Sir James Robert Dunlop Smith (1858-1921) was educated at Edinburgh University and Royal Military College, Sandhurst; appointed Private Secretary to the Lieut. Governor of the Punjab, 1883-87; Private Secretary to the Viceroy, 1905-10; Knighted, 1910; Political A.D.C. to the Secretary of State for India 1910-19.

local and imperial governments, and finally of the Secretary of State. I put it to Sir James Dunlop Smith whether he thinks it is in the interests of the British connection with India to allow this system to continue. After all, the people of India and even the Mussalmans are not going to tolerate it, and every new settled fact will require less effort and less time to be unsettled, and although Government may "muddle through" it, the process of muddling through is very exhausting, and this, in itself, should make them pause and consider. I told him that I had not yet made a formal request to Lord Crewe for an interview, because I do not want to get a formal refusal after which the only dignified course open to us would be to appeal to the public through the Press, and on the platform. It may be that Government organs here may give us "*darwaza bund*" but the Socialists and Nationalists, like the poor, are always with us, and we cannot be effectively gagged. Besides, if we are gagged here, we could not be gagged in India and I appealed to Sir James Dunlop Smith to consider the likely effect of our going back to India, and telling our people, whether in a loud voice from the public platform, or in whispers to our closets that if the smallest officials is unjust to you in this country there is no house of redress anywhere except by your taking the law into your own hands. Of course, this would be a threat, if uttered publicly, but when addressed to him, as a personal friend, and one who had the ear of Lord Crewe, it was the friendliest of warnings, and I implored him to take it from me as one who would not, even if he could, turn out the British bag and baggage from India. I hope I have convinced him of the reality of our loyalty, and at the same time, of the great seriousness of the situation. I asked him, and he promised me, to write to Lord Crewe, who had gone out somewhere to speak for the Government. I told him that it was no use merely writing to Lord Crewe, and getting a 'no' in reply. I wanted him to convince Lord Crewe of the extreme desirability of seeing us and giving us a patient hearing. He has promised to do this, and we must await results.

My dear Shaukat, this is the strongest expression of opinion that we have yet permitted ourselves, and really we are astonished at our own self-restraint. The '*Times*' and one or two other Tory papers, like the '*Standard*' have reviled us, though of course not by name, and have conspired to keep out of the papers every telegram which has been sent to them at so much cost by the Moslem League. And yet, we have not written a single line in our defence. This was with

a view to be able to convince everybody that the public Press was to be used by us only when we had failed to get the ear of the Ministers. If Lord Crewe and Montague still refuse to see us, we shall simply flood the Press with our letters, and seek every opportunity of interesting the British public and showing up a Government that pretends to be liberal. It may be that we may succeed no better with the Press than we have succeeded with Ministry, and in that our clear duty would be to appeal to our own people. But our conscience would then be clear, and before God and man we should stand acquitted of any sinister motives.

We have been in England exactly a month, and although the Cawnpore question is satisfactorily settled, you will perhaps say that we have done nothing else. This is partly true, and the reason has been that we did not try at first to see anybody before giving every chance to the India Office. But since Montague wrote to me I have been seeing editors of newspapers, and in this respect we have not done badly. I wrote to you that I have seen Spender twice and I saw him again the third time and have got a promise from him to publish a letter that I may address to him. That's the "*Westminster Gazette*". Nevinson very kindly invited me to the private dinner of the '*Nation*' and I sat between him and Massingham who has asked me to write an article for the '*Nation*'. Redcliffe, who was the editor of the '*Statesman*' got some particulars from me about the use that is now being made of the Press Act, and is writing a leading article for the '*Manchester Guardian*', which may have already been published. Keep a sharp look out for it and reproduce it for the '*Comrade*' and '*Hamdard*' with your own comments. He also introduced me to Gardiner, the editor of the '*Daily News*', as he wanted him to see the photographs of the blood-thirsty ruffians who were arrested by our angelic collector of Cawnpore on the charge of rioting and subsequently released so magnanimously, after having been locked up for varying periods in the common jail as accused. Of course I refer to the little boys whose photographs if published here would show something of the angelic nature of our officials. Gardiner dined with me at very short notice last Wednesday, and I explained to him the whole situation about the Press Act. I shall catch him early next week again, and get him to write a leading article if I contributed a letter to the '*Daily News*'. I have been introduced by letter to Scott and Montague of the '*Manchester Guardian*', who are trying to arrange a meeting for us at Manchester and I am also seeing shortly

Gwynne, the editor of the *'Morning Post'*, which although a Tory paper, has not been opposed to the Turks. We have also written to John Dillon, M.P., to Dublin and have already heard in reply from George Russell, a well-known writer in Dublin. I cannot say, if we can address a meeting in Ireland, but we shall certainly go there and meet these men. I have already met Rothstein, who is on the *'Daily News'* Staff, and we may perhaps arrange that if we start a weekly paper here, he may edit it. I have also met Dr. Rutherford,[4] and am going to lunch with him soon. We meet Mackarness to-morrow or later and I have already written to the editor of *'Truth'* at great length and have also asked the following for interviews.

Rubrey Herbert, M.P., Professor Brown, H.G. Wells, Cunningham Grahame James, Douglas and our dear friend Chesterton and Shaw. I have asked Prof. Browne[5] to introduce me to some more authors because, after all, it is they who form the public opinion of England, and although that may take long to achieve results, those results would be the most durable. What will journalists and authors and M. Ps. in the course of the next three weeks we would have knocked at every door. Of course this means a tremendous amount of writing, and have my neglecting poor Amy and the kids, to whom I must convey my kisses and love by proxy. I hope they will forgive me for having apparently neglected them. I am amused to see in *Hablul Matin*[6] and the *Paisa Akhbar*[7] that I have come here for the sake of my health. I see that you have been unwise enough to publish something about the purpose of our visit to Cairo, which should not have been published, but although I wish you to publish in the papers nothing unless we ask you to do it, or only generally, I think you can safely say that the Aga Khan is the only person in England who is anxious about my health, and that though he very kindly went to consult Sir Almroth Wright with a view to secure the address of a diabetes specialist, and has sent it to me, have been carrying about that address for the last ten days.

I must close this letter now, but I enclose copy of a letter which will tell you its own tale. I may only add that the Aga has agreed

4. They were Journalists and friends of Mohamed Ali.
5. Well-known public men in England.
6. A Calcutta paper.
7. A Lahore paper.

now to give the ultimatum to friend Ameer Ali, and in any case a dinner of some sort will come off, but if Ameer Ali does not join this dinner as a host, without paying a penny for it, we intend to have a meeting of the League called here and this timid and selfish 'sultan' deposed and a regular "constitution" brought into force. We have even decided to ask Dr. Abdul Majid[8] to take up the office of the President and after that the right honourable gentleman can busy himself with the funds of the Red Crescent Society and the Mosque about which some inquiries will shortly be made.

Good-bye, and my love to all.

Please take this as a letter from Wazir Hasan also, and send copy carefully to Nabiullah[9] and to Itrat Husain (Benares).

Yours Every Loving
(MOHAMED ALI)
Urdu signature

Source:
Shaukat Ali Papers

8. Dr Abdul Majid was a Turkish doctor.
9. Syed Nabiullah (-1925) held a small zamindari in Allahabad district. Graduated from Aligarh, proceeded to England for Bar-at-Law and returned from there in 1885 and started practicing law. He took active part in Muslim politics.

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